

Syllabus

UNITED STATES & CANADA RESEARCH SEMINAR

16th — 20th October 2017

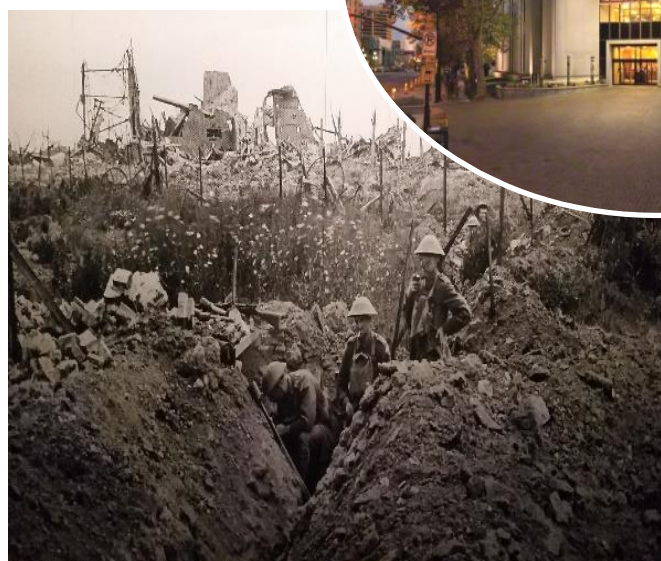


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Class Schedule	3
Presenter Biographies	4
Places to Eat	6
Things to See and Do	7
Using the FamilySearch Library Catalog Effectively	8
Canadian Census Records	12
Are You Your Own Brick Wall?	16
U.S. Vital Records Overview	19
“Why didn’t my ancestor naturalize?”	24
FamilySearch Research Wiki: What it Can Do for You!	28
Canada Vital Records	30
Descendancy Research	32
Basic United States Land Records	36
Where There’s a Will, There’s a Probate	41
Tips and Tricks Using FamilySearch Historical Records Collection	48
Quebec Research	56
A United States Case Study	60
U.S. Census Techniques and Strategies for Finding Elusive Ancestors	62
Great Internet Sited for United States Research	67
Family Tree Memories	71
The Research Process	78
Genetic Genealogy: An Introduction to DNA	80
Using LDS Church Records	85
Freedmen’s Bureau Records	89
Immigration and Canadian Border	91
Over There! World War I Records Over Here	97

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday, 16 October

- 9:00am – 10:00am: Using the FamilySearch Library Catalog Effectively
10:15am – 11:15am: Canada Census Research
11:30am – 12:30pm: Are You Your Own Brick Wall: Common Genealogical Mistakes and Their Solutions
12:30pm – 1:30pm: Lunch
1:30pm – 2:30pm: United States Vital Records
2:45pm – 3:45pm: United States Naturalization Records

Tuesday, 17 October

- 9:00am – 10:00am: FamilySearch Wiki
10:15am – 11:15am: Canada Vital Records
11:30am – 12:30pm: Descendancy Research
12:30pm – 1:30pm: Lunch
1:30pm – 2:30pm: United States Land Records
2:45pm – 3:45pm: United States Probate Records

Wednesday, 18 October

- 9:00am – 10:00am: Tips and Tricks for Using FamilySearch's Historical Records Collection
10:15am – 11:15am: Canada Research, Quebec Research
11:30am – 12:30pm: A United States Case Study
12:30pm – 1:30pm: Lunch
1:30pm – 2:30pm: U.S. Census Techniques and Strategies for Finding Elusive Ancestors
2:45pm – 3:45pm: Great Internet sites for United States Research

Thursday, 19 October

- 9:00 am – 10:00am: Family Tree Memories
10:15 am – 11:15am: Canada Research: Ontario Research
11:30am – 12:30pm: The Research Process
12:30pm – 1:30pm: Lunch
1:30pm – 2:30pm: Genetic Genealogy: An Introduction to DNA
2:45pm – 3:45pm: Using LDS Church Records

Friday, 20 October

- 9:00am – 10:00am: Freedmen's Bureau Records
10:15am – 11:15am: Immigration and Canadian Border Crossings
11:30am – 12:30pm: Ask Your United States and Canada Research Questions
12:30pm – 1:30pm: Lunch
1:30pm – 2:30pm: Canada Military Records
2:45pm – 3:45pm: Over There!: World War I Records Over Here

Presenter Biographies

Beth Taylor, CGSM works as a US/Canada Research Specialist at the Family History Library. She is a Board-Certified Genealogist (CG), holds a BA of History from Brigham Young University (2005), and has worked for FamilySearch for twelve years. Her specialties and interests include DNA, Quakers, organizing, land records, probate records, and more.

Carol E. Smith, AG® works at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City as a supervisor of the Guest Services team, where she is responsible for the Guest Experience in the library. She is accredited in New England research and has worked with the US/Canada team on their reference desks, as well as doing professional research. She has a BA degree in Family History from Brigham Young University.

Danielle Batson, AG®, MLS is an Accredited Genealogist® professional in the Midwest States region. She has worked for the Family History Department since 2000. For 13 years, she worked as a US/Canada Research Specialist at the Family History Library. She currently works full time on the FamilySearch Research Wiki, creating content projects for missionaries and the community.

Jason Harrison, CGSM currently works in the Family History Library's Hosting and Research Services. He received his B.A. in Family History from Brigham Young University, is a former New England Historic Genealogical Society intern, and National Genealogical Society conference lecturer. His research specialties include New England, Mountain states, and LDS research.

Ken Nelson, AG® is a project manager with FamilySearch. He has a special interest in United States military records with particular interest in World War I; his grandfather having serviced in the Tank Corps in France. He recently presented on the Revolutionary War at Root Tech 2017.

Lisa McBride, AG® is accredited in Mid-South United States genealogy, and has worked for FamilySearch for 6 years. Three of those years were spent as a research specialist for the US/Canada team at the Family History Library. She currently manages Area Library and Center Services for FamilySearch.

Lyn D. Rasmussen is a US/Canada Research Specialist at the Family History Library and has also spent time in professional research. Lyn earned her BA in History-Family History Genealogy from Brigham Young University and interned at Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center. She enjoys problem solving in New England and Southern States, especially assisting guests in these geographic areas.

Marilyn Markham, AG®, CGSM, MLS has been with the Family History Department since 1984. Working in numerous positions: cataloger, reference librarian, acquisitions control analyst, restrictions team leader, collection management, learning and the consultant services team. Marilyn is currently assigned as a Research Specialist in the Family History Library.

Russell Lynch, AG® is a project manager in the Records and Partners Division of FamilySearch. He has worked in reference, collection development, and system support at FamilySearch for over 25 years. With a Masters of Library and Information Science from Brigham Young University, Russell also served on the board of directors for genealogical and library associations.

Stephen Young, AG® a native of London, Ontario, earned a bachelor's degree at Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah in Family and Local History (1985), and a master's degree in American History (emphasis in Public History) at Bowling Green State University in Ohio (1990). He has been employed with FamilySearch since 1988 and has been accredited (AG) in Canadian English research since 1990.

Thom Reed is currently a Senior Global Outreach Manager for FamilySearch International. Since May 2015, he has served on the Board of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS) – Utah Chapter. He received his Master of Business Administration degree in Marketing from Brigham Young University.

Tim Bingaman, AG® has worked at the Family History Library since 1990 acquiring his AG in Mid-Atlantic States in 1991. A member of the Historical Society of Berks County, Pennsylvania and the Berks County Genealogical Society, Tim has made numerous trips to Pennsylvania where he spends a great deal of time visiting societies, courthouses, cemeteries and the neighborhoods where his ancestors lived.

Yvonne Sorenson, AG® is an Accredited Genealogist in New England research. She has a Bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University. She worked for 18 years doing professional research, specializing in research in Canada, New England, Mid-Atlantic, and the Midwestern United States. She is currently employed as the Operations Manager in the Family History Library and helps Library patrons with Canadian and United States research.

Places to Eat

A. Church Office Building Cafeteria
Monday – Friday
Lunch 11:00am – 1:30pm
50 East North Temple

E. Lion House Pantry
Monday – Saturday, 11:00am – 8:00pm
63 East South Temple

H. The Gate Way Mail
18 North Rio Grande Street

B. The Garden Restaurant
Joseph Smith Memorial Building
Monday – Thursday, 11:00am – 9:00pm
Friday – Saturday, 11:00am – 10:00pm
15 East South Temple

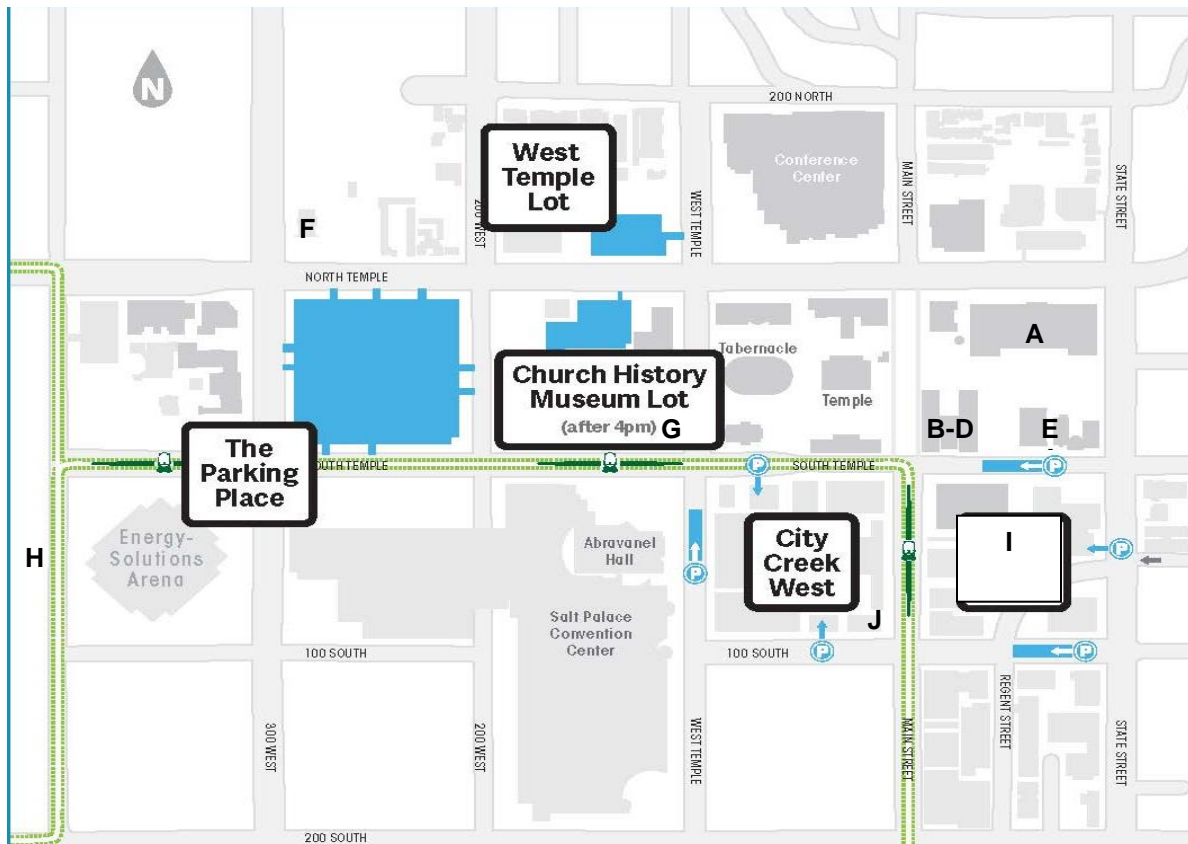
F. Crown Burger Restaurant
118 North 300 West

I. City Creek Center
50 South Main Street
Salt Lake City
(Food Court)

C. Nauvoo Café
Joseph Smith Memorial Building
Monday – Friday, 7:00am – 8:00pm
Saturday 11:00am – 8:00pm
15 East South Temple

G. JB's Restaurant
102 West South Temple

J. Starbucks
80 Main Street



Things to See and Do

Organ Recitals

Tabernacle on Temple Square

Monday through Saturday at 12:00 noon

Temple Square

50 West North Temple

Open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Humanitarian Center

1665 S Bennett Road (2030 West)

Salt Lake City

Contact: 801-240-5954 (Main)

Weekday tours are available all year (except holidays) from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Church History Museum

45 North West Temple Street

Salt Lake City

Contact: 801-240-3310

Schedule: Monday to Friday: 9:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Holidays: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

This is the Place Heritage Park

2601 E. Sunnyside Ave.

Salt Lake City, UT 84108

Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum

300 N. Main St.

Salt Lake City

Hours: Monday - Saturday 9 am to 5 pm; Wednesday 9 am to 8 pm

Clark Planetarium

110 South 400 West

Salt Lake City

Phone: 385-468-STAR (7827)

The Cathedral of the Madeleine

331 E. South Temple

Salt Lake City



Using the FamilySearch Library Catalog Effectively

George Tobler

The FamilySearch Catalog is a guide to family histories; birth, marriage and death records; census records; church registers; books, periodicals and many other records. The records described in the catalog come from throughout the world. New items are catalogued daily and added to the website weekly. These records may be in a book, on microfiche or microfilm, searchable online or in a computer file. If a particular item is available at another FamilySearch Center besides the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, then a pull-down menu will indicate the locations where the item is available.

The FamilySearch Catalog has been made available via WorldCat since 2014. WorldCat is an online computer library center of over 2 billion titles at 72,000 libraries in 172 countries and territories. You can do an inter library loan.

THERE ARE EIGHT TYPES OF SEARCH OPTIONS:

You can use multiple search boxes in one search.

PLACE SEARCH

One of the most frequently used searches is the Places search. Places search is used to find records on three levels of government jurisdictions: Town, County and State. Check all jurisdictions when searching for records, etc.

First open Family Search.org, then go to search, then catalog.

City and Town Records

EXERCISE:

We are looking for an ancestor who was born about **1812** in **Needham, Massachusetts**.

- Places-Type> **Needham** and a dropdown list of places comes up.
- Click on> U.S., **Massachusetts, Norfolk, Needham** □ Click on> **Subjects**, type **Town Records** □ Notice the **Add** button to add to print list. □ Click on the years > **1711-1862**.

County Records (Do not type the word "county".)

EXERCISE:

We are looking for the will of our grandfather who died in Price, Carbon County, Utah around **1910**. It can be valuable to add the town to see other record possibilities, but probates are kept on the county level.

Places

- Type **Carbon Utah** and a drop down list of places comes up.

- Click > **United States, Utah, Carbon.**
- Click > **Subjects** > Type **Probate Records**, search.
- Click > **Probate Records and Registers, 1895-1966.**

Important: Scroll to "Film Notes." The catalog has both Probate Registers and Probate Records

State Records

EXERCISE:

We are looking for the **Mills** family in **Maine** but we don't know the county, so we need to search for statewide records.

Places > Type **Maine** and a drop

down list of places comes up.

- Click on > United States, Maine
- Click on > **Subjects** and
- Type **vital records** > Scroll down
- Click on > **Vital Records 1892-1907** > Scroll down the page to **Film**

Notes (Next to last)

SURNAMES

Surnames search is helpful in finding Catalog entries for published family histories and other compiled works that include a specific surname. Surname search is best if you have an uncommon surname. For common surnames like Jones, Smith or Williams a Keyword search works better.

EXCERISE:

We are looking for the published works for the surname Bartlett and are hoping to find some information in the 1800's.

- Click on **Surnames** > type **Bartlett** > search > If there are too many matches you can filter by year.
- Click on the Bartlett Family Bible Records.
- Scrolling down to the film notes tells us the location of the film.
- What do we know about this film/fiche number?
- Add to the Print List

TITLES

The Titles search is used to find a source by its title. You do not need to know the whole title, just use the words you do know. The more of the title you type, the shorter the list of the results will be.

EXERCISE:

We want to know if the Library has the book entitled **Our West River Heritage.**

- Type the Title in the Title search box.
- Click > **Search**
- What is the call number for the book and on which floor is the book found?
- Add to the Print List

AUTHOR

This search is not restricted to an author. Use this search to find the authors details and records for a person, church, society, government agency and other records identified as an author in the Catalog

EXERCISE: We want to find out if the library has any books authored by **Katie Toponce.**

- Type the name of the Author
- Click > **Search**
- How many book has she written?
- Search in authors search option for the following:
 Type > **Military**
 Type > **Quakers**
- Add to Print List

SUBJECTS

This search is based on the Library of Congress subjects. Native Races, Nationalities, Occupations, Religious Groups and Languages, World History, Geography, Political Science, Law, Fine Arts, Medicine, Military and Naval Science and more. Specific subjects are required in order to get a successful result.

EXERCISE: We need to find our grandparents in the Cherokee 1890 Census of Oklahoma.

- Type > **Cherokee Census Oklahoma**, the catalog finds several results. □ Add > **1890** to the words you have already typed, Click > **Search** □ Find the source written by **Barbara L. Benge** and click on it.
- What are the 3 ways to view this census? on-line, cd-rom or book

KEYWORDS

This is the most versatile search in the Catalog. A Keyword search can help in locating authors, different subjects and other sources when not all the words are known.

EXERCISE: We would like to know if the Catalog has any information on the Welsh who settled in North Carolina.

- This will be a Keyword Search □ Type > **Welsh North Carolina** □ How many results do you show?
- Refine your search by adding 1820 in back of North Carolina you have already typed in the search box.

EXERCISE: We were here at the Library years ago and found a book on the Baptist Church in South Carolina and we would like to look at it again. The only words that we can remember are Padgett's Baptist Church with author's name of Sparks.

- Keyword Search, Type > **Padgetts Baptist Church** >click search □ What is the full title of the book?
- What is the full name of the author?

ALL NUMBER

Call number search can be used in helping us find the full call number of a book.

EXERCISE: We want to find a book about our ancestor who volunteered with some Atlantic Canadians from Maine during the Civil War, written by Johnson. We did not copy all the Catalog Call Number: Just **971.5M**.

- What is the full title of the book?
- What is the full name of the author?
- What other searches could you have used?
- Add to Print List

FILM/FICHE NUMBER

Film/Fiche Number search is used to find a film or fiche by the Catalog number.

EXERCISE: We are searching the Catalog for information on our Fausett Family. We have the film number 1183536 item 13, but can't find it in the film cabinets.

- Type in the film number **1183536**. □ click on > **item13**
- Where is the film located?
- Why is it on International floor?
- Add to Print List

EXERCISE:

- Type, film #**6332770**, the source is a book titled "Leaves of the Past, 1828-1880," by Ruth Hughes Hitchcock.
- Is this a film and where is it located in the Library?



Canadian Census Records

Lisa McBride, AG

FamilySearch
mcbritelw@familysearch.org
15 September 2017

Census records are one of the primary sources for finding family information in Canada. Most of these census records are now digitized and can be searched online.

Canadian Records are Different from U.S. Records

- Record types are the same as in the United States: Vital, probate, census, land, and church records
- Who kept the records is not the same as in the U.S.: Every province is different; record types in each province are different; a major source in one province may be less useful, useless, or non-existent in another province
- For Quebec, they used French “dit” names, meaning “also known as,” or alias. It was used to distinguish one branch of a family from another
- If an ancestor moved to the United States, search U.S. records first, including U.S. census, Canadian Border Crossings, Naturalization Records
- Place names changed over time: names were lost, small towns combined or incorporated with larger cities; duplicate place names
- Names of places and people may be Anglicized or spelled phonetically
- Families often name a baby after a sibling who died
- Accuracy of report ages varied widely, especially in early records

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1763—New France was turned over to Great Britain after the Seven Year’s War
- 1774–1784—Province of Quebec was established
- 1791–1841—Old Province of Quebec was divided into Lower Canada (Quebec) and Upper Canada (Ontario)
- 1841—Upper Canada became Canada West (Ontario) and Lower Canada became Canada East (Quebec)
- 1867—Canada organized with four provinces (Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick)
- 1870—Manitoba
- 1871—British Columbia
- 1873—Prince Edward Island
- 1898—Yukon
- 1905—Saskatchewan and Alberta
- 1949—Newfoundland
- 1999—Nunavut

CENSUS TIPS

- Early census records began in 1666 in French areas
- Early censuses in Quebec often listed women by their maiden name
- Portions of all censuses have been lost. If books and finding aids list “missing” census is not available anywhere
- Earlier censuses for some provinces
- Format not standard until 1871
- Geographic counties equal township, towns, and villages
- Census was taken by province, then by census district and sub-district
- Census districts and sub-districts are voting or election districts, not counties
- In some provinces, census districts and sub-districts have the same name as counties and townships. Townships may be equal to census sub-districts
- A census district may have the same name as a county, but may not include the same townships
- Census boundaries change frequently
- Townships or census sub-districts may be in different census districts for each census year
- Provinces where census district boundaries often match geographic counties: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island. Provinces where census district boundaries are less likely to match geographic counties: Quebec, Ontario. Western Canada provinces had no counties but only federal election districts

National Census, 1871–1921

- Taken every year since 1871
- First coast to coast census taken in 1881

Dates of Enumeration

- 1871—April 2
- 1881—April 4
- 1891—April 6
- 1901—March 31
- 1906 and 1916—June for Prairie Provinces only (Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta)
- 1911—1 June
- 1921—1 June
- No national census available yet after 1921

INFORMATION ON CENSUS RECORDS

Early Census Records

- May be statistical—Most censuses before 1851 were head of family only
- Provincial census records more standard by 1851
- After 1867, all forms standardized listing every person by name

Census Records after 1867

- Name of each person (some smaller provinces still Head of Family only)
- Age and whether born within the last 12 months
- Province or country of birth
- Origin (ethnic background)

- Occupation or profession
- Religion
- Marital status and whether born within the last 12 months
- Later censuses may also include:
- Month, day, and year of birth
- Education
- Year of immigration and naturalization
- Nationality
- Country or place of birth of parents
- Race or tribal origin
- Mother tongue
- Employment information
- Relationship to head of household

Census Clues Leading to Other Records

- Religion—church and cemetery records
- Country of birth—immigration records
- Whether born or married in last 12 months—birth, marriage, and church records
- Origin, race, and mother tongue—church records; ethnic record
- Education—school records
- Year of immigration and naturalization—immigration and naturalization and citizenship records

ONLINE CENSUS RECORDS

Most Canadian census records are now indexed

- If no index is available, you need to know the name of the census district and sub-district, and province, and search the records page by page
- Consult the Canada Census Wiki page for links to indexes and images online:
https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Canada_Census
- AutomatedGenealogy.com has indexes and images for 1851-2, 1901, 1911, and 1906 provincial census for prairie provinces
- Library and Archives Canada has indexes and digital images of national census
<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/Pages/census.aspx>
- Ancestry.com has early census records, 1851–1921, and provincial census for prairie provinces in 1906 and 1916
- FamilySearch.org has census indexes and some images

OTHER CENSUS RECORDS

- There are indexes to various census records that can be found in the Family History Library Catalog using the Place Search under the name of the province, county, and town and the topic: Census—[year]

Alberta (1905)

- 1881, 1891, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1916, 1921
- Earlier census for Northwest Territories

British Columbia (1871)

- 1881–1921

Manitoba (1870)

- 1870, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1916, 1921

Newfoundland (1949)

- Partial 1911, 1921, 1935, 1945
- Few 19th century censuses list names. Mostly statistical summaries

New Brunswick (1867)

- Part of Nova Scotia until 1783
- 1851–1921

Nova Scotia (1867)

- Included in French Acadia until about 1755
- 1686, 1708, 1714, 1752, 1770, 1811, 1818, 1827, 1851–1921

Ontario (1867)

- Separated from Quebec in 1791
- 1842, 1878, 1850, 1851–1921

Prince Edward Island (1873)

- Separated from Nova Scotia in 1769
- 1728, 1798, 1848, 1861–1921

Quebec (1867)

- Part of New France until 1775; included Ontario until 1791
- 1666, 1667, 1681, 1762, 1825, 1831, 1842, 1851–1921

Saskatchewan (1905)

- Originally Rupert's Land; part of Northwest Territories in 1870
- 1881, 1891, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1916, 1921

Yukon (1898)

- Originally Rupert's Land, part of Northwest Territories in 1870
- 1881–1921

Summary

- Research in the Canadian census can contain family relationships and other valuable information
- Examine the information found in each census to find clues to other records to search
- You may discover hidden treasures



Are You Your Own Brick Wall?

Beth Taylor, CGsm

Don't get so focused on your research, your family, or your family traditions that you ignore or overlook essential clues and resources. Come learn about common mistakes and how to overcome these mistakes.

Thinking Genealogically

- **Family Stories.** Don't rely on family stories and traditions. Treat each story as a source. Consider each detail and fact carefully, especially within historical context. Work to disprove these traditions.
- **Published Family Histories.** Don't rely on published or online family trees, especially if they are not documented.
- **Forcing Relationships.** Don't try and force a relationship so you can join a society, get a scholarship, or connect to a famous person. Let the records lead your research.
- **Making Assumptions.** Be careful of making assumptions that limit your research. (For example, just because an individual was poor didn't mean they didn't leave a probate record.)
- **Historical Context.** Consider historical context. Your ancestor was not born in an area if it was not yet settled (unless they were Native American). Records were created because of historical laws and events. People followed common migration trails and routes.
- **Research Communities.** Research your ancestors within the context of their community. It's possible the records of a neighbor will include information about your ancestor. Or, a community may have immigrated or migrated as a group.
- **Track Your Research.** Track your research. Keep a log of what sources you review and what you find. Save or print a copy of every record that you find.

Planning Your Research

- **Set a Research Goal.** Plan your research. Identify which family you are researching and what you want to know about that family before you start searching records.
- **Review Previous Research.** Review any research you or your family completed in the past. Read through old notes. Analyze records you already discovered. Determine where you are in the research process.
- **One Family at a Time.** Focus on one family at a time. Research the entire family, including all the siblings. Research the siblings until their death.
- **Known to Unknown.** Work from the known to the unknown. Choose a family for whom you have at least one date, place, and documents to support that information. If you don't have enough information, move down a generation.
- **Death to Birth.** Research your ancestor's entire life. Start with records created at your ancestor's death and work backwards to their birth.
- **Research Strategy.** Create a research plan. What records are most likely to answer your research goal? Consider the time-period and location in which your ancestor lived. Use the

FamilySearch Wiki and other online resources to identify which records to search for first. (If researching in the United States, start by locating all census records.)

Searching Online

- Record Hints. Don't rely only on record hints. Go out and search the genealogy websites.
- One Database at a Time. When searching genealogy websites, search one collection at a time.
- Spelling Variations. Search for spelling variations. Names have not always been spelled the same way.
- Search Results. Review all search results. Carefully consider whether each and every entry could be your ancestor. Also, scroll through and review all of the search results.
- Repeat Your Searches. When you don't find your ancestor in a specific collection, change your search parameters and search again. (Remember, you don't even need to search using a name.)
- Record Images. When you find your ancestor in a record collection, look at the image. Don't rely only on the index.

Locating Records

- Go Offline. Not all records are available online. Search for records in books, microfilm, and onsite at libraries, archives, and other repositories. (Determine where the records are located based on your research plan.)
- Derivative Sources. Don't rely on derivative sources. When you find a transcript, abstract, or index, locate the original record. Information may have been incorrectly extracted.
- Beyond the Basics. Use record types beyond the basics. Birth, marriage, and death records may get you started, but probate, land, tax, and other records may make important connections.
- Locate Every Record. When researching a brick wall, you will need to search for every record type, from every repository, from every locality and jurisdiction. (Locating everything does not mean simply finding a birth date, marriage date, death date, and the names of children.)

Analyzing Records

- Read the Record. Read through every field, column, or paragraph of a record. Read through the record several times if needed.
- Extract Key Information. Extract key information from each record including names, dates, places, occupations, religions, relationship, and so forth.
- Compare Information. Compare the information from different records. Identify conflicting information. Create timelines and tables to sort and organize the information.
- Write Your Conclusions. Once you have answered your research goal, write out your conclusion. Include full source citations.

Participating in the Community

- Stay Informed. Stay up-to-date on information about recently digitized or index record sets.
- Learn from Publications. Learn more about unknown record types by reading genealogical journals, the FamilySearch Research wiki, and more.
- Attend Classes. Attend classes, conferences, and webinars to learn more about research strategies and record types.

- Ask for Help. Ask for help early in your research process. Then, follow through on the research suggestions.
- Bring it with You. Keep a copy of your tree, research logs, timelines, and to-do lists in an easy to carry digital format or online. If you find yourself visiting an archive or library, you will be able to search for and locate needed record quickly and easily or ask for help.



U.S. Vital Records Overview

Tim Bingaman, AG®, Research Specialist
bingamantd@familysearch.org

This class is designed to provide patrons with a basic understanding of U.S. vital records, including the various types of records, the civil jurisdictions that have responsibilities for the records, and the regional differences in the availability of those records.

Importance of Vital Records

Civil governments have created records of births, marriages, and deaths. Records containing this information are commonly called “vital records,” because they refer to critical events in a person’s life. These are the most important documents for genealogical research, but the births, marriages, and deaths of many people have never been recorded by civil authorities. **Normally** a vital record is recorded at or near the time of the event.

General Historical Background

The practice of recording civil vital statistics developed slowly in the United States. Early vital information was sometimes recorded in brief entries in register books until the twentieth century, when it became more common to create certificates. Some town clerks in colonial America (especially New England) recorded vital information, but these records are incomplete. The federal government has not registered vital records, except for some Americans born outside the country who were recorded in embassy or consulate records.

Records of marriage were generally the first vital records kept in a locality. In most states, the counties or towns began recording marriages as soon as they were established. Whether the marriage ceremony was performed by a civil or church authority, local laws required the marriage to be recorded in civil records. Exceptions were sometimes made, however.

The local health departments of a few large cities began recording births and deaths by the mid-1800s. The early records are usually incomplete. Many counties in the East and Midwest were recording births and deaths by the late 1800s.

Each state eventually developed its own laws and created a statewide registration system. Unfortunately, these records do not exist until the early 1900s in most states. Local offices did not always comply immediately with the registration laws. Within 20 years after registration laws were enacted, most states were recording at least 90 percent of the births and deaths.

Regional Differences

New England: These states have kept good vital records. The town clerks kept register books as early as the 1600s. Most of these states have statewide indexes of the existing records. Most New England states began statewide registration of births, marriages, and deaths between 1841 and 1897. Vermont began centralized registration in 1919, but individual town records go back to the 1700s. Except for New Hampshire (which began recording marriages as early as 1640), many New England marriages in colonial times were not recorded because of the laws and religious customs of the region.

Middle-Atlantic: It is unusual to find any vital records before 1881 for New York and 1885 for Pennsylvania, except in the larger cities. All the states began statewide registration of births and deaths between 1878 and 1915. Statewide registration of marriages began between 1847 and 1906. New Jersey and Delaware have marriage records dating from the 1660s (or the creation of the counties), but systematic recording of marriages in New Jersey did not begin until 1795.

South: In the southern states, laws for civil registration of births and deaths were enacted between 1899 and 1919. Marriages were a legal contract which involved property rights, so the counties recorded them carefully, starting in the early 1700s (except in South Carolina where they began in 1911). Most states initiated statewide marriage files between 1911 and 1962. Virginia counties began recording births, marriages, deaths in 1853, but stopped between 1896 and 1912. Church vital records often date back into the 1700s.

Midwest: Government officials in the Midwestern states began files of births and deaths as early as the 1860s in many counties. Statewide registration of births and deaths was initiated between 1880 and 1920. Officials began recording marriage dates as soon as each county was established and generally began statewide registration between 1880 and 1962.

West: The western states vary greatly in their registration of vital records due to their different settlement patterns. Most area began statewide registration of births and deaths between 1903 and 1920. While most counties were keeping marriage records by 1890, or the date the county was created, statewide registration generally began between 1905 and 1978. Hawaii's records of births, marriages, and deaths start as early as the 1840s.

Birth Records

Birth records generally give the child's name, sex, date and place of birth, and the names of the parents. Records of the twentieth century provide additional details such as the name of the hospital, birthplace of parents, occupation of the parents, marital status of the mother, and the number of other children born to the mother.

If no record was filed at the time of an individual's birth, he may have arranged for a **delayed registration of birth** by showing proof of his birth as recorded in a Bible, school, census, or church record, or by testimony from a person who witnessed the birth. These registrations generally start in 1937, yet the birth may have occurred many years earlier. The registration is usually in the state where the birth occurred. The Family History Library has acquired copies of many delayed certificates, especially for the Midwestern states.

Marriage Records

Marriages were usually recorded by the clerk of the town or county where the bonds or licenses were issued (generally where the bride resided). You may find records that show a couple's intent to marry and records of the actual marriage.

Records of Intention to Marry

Various records may have been created that show a couple's intent to marry.

Banns and Intentions: were made a few weeks before a couple planned to marry. The couple may have been required to announce their intentions in order to give other community members the opportunity to raise objections to the marriage. This was a rather common custom in the southern and New England States through the mid-1800s.

Banns were a religious custom in which the couple announced to their local congregation that they planned to marry. They may have also posted a written notice at the church. **Intentions** were written notices presented to the local civil authority and posted in a public place for a given period of time. The minister or town clerk recorded these announcements in a register, or you may find them interfiled with other town or church records.

Marriage bonds: are written guarantees or promises of payment made by the groom or another person (often a relative of the bride) to ensure that a forthcoming marriage would be legal. The person who posted the bond was known as surety or bondsman. The bond was presented to the minister or official who would perform the ceremony. The bond was then returned to the town or county clerk. These documents were frequently used in the southern and middle-Atlantic states up to the mid-1800s.

Applications and licenses: are the most common types of records showing intent to marry. These gradually replaced the use of banns, intentions, and bonds. A bride and groom obtained a **license** to be married by applying to the proper civil authorities, usually a town or county clerk. These records have the most information of genealogical value, including the couple's names, ages, and residence. Later records also provide their race, birth dates, occupations, and usually the names of the parents. The license was presented to the person who performed the marriage and was later returned to the town or county clerk. **Applications** for a license are primarily a twentieth century record. These often contain more detailed information than the license.

Records of Marriages

In most cases it can be assumed that the couple married a short time after announcing their intent, even though you may not find proof of the actual marriage. A minister, justice of the peace, military officer, a ship captain, or state official could legally marry a couple. You may find the following records that document the actual marriage.

Certificates: The individual who performed the ceremony or the civil office where it was recorded may have given the couple a certificate of marriage. This may be in the possession of the family. The clerk of the court may have a copy.

Returns and Registers: Town and county clerks generally recorded the marriages they performed in a register or book. If the marriage was performed by someone else, such as a minister or justice of the peace, that person was required to report, or "return," the marriage information to the town or county clerk. This information may have been reported in writing or verbally, or more frequently, the official recorded the event on the license or bond and returned this document to the clerk. For this purpose, many licenses and bonds were printed with a separate section of the document designated as the "return."

The information on the **return** usually included the names of the couple, the date and place of the marriage, and the name of the person who performed the marriage. Twentieth-century returns often add the residence of the couple, the names of the parents or witnesses, and the certificate number.

The town or county clerk recorded ("registered") the marriage returns in a separate **register** or book, although you may find some early returns in court or town minutes and deed books. He may also have written on the license or the bond the date he registered the marriage.

Twentieth-century marriages are still registered by the county or town, but most states now require the counties to report the marriage to the state office of vital records. Many counties keep duplicates of the records they send to the state.

Death Records

Death records are especially helpful because they may provide important information on a person's birth, spouse, and parents. Some researchers look first for death records because there are often death records for persons who have no birth or marriage records.

Early death records, like cemetery records, generally give the name, date, and place of death. Twentieth-century certificates usually include the age or date of birth (and sometimes the place), race, length of residence in the county or state, cause of death, name of hospital and funeral home, burial information, and the informant's name (often a relative). They often provided the

name of a spouse or parents. Since 1950, social security numbers are given on most death certificates. Birth and other information in a death record may not be accurate because the informant may not have had complete information.

Death certificates may be filed in the state where an individual died and the state where he is buried.

Locating Vital Records

Records at the Family History Library

The Family History Library has copies of many vital records, primarily before 1950. However, if a record was never kept, was not available in the courthouse at the time of microfilming, was not microfilmed, or is restricted from public access by the laws of the state, the Family History Library **does not have a copy**. You may use the records at the library for your family research, but the library does not issue or certify certificates for living or deceased individuals.

To find out what records are available, do a "Place-names" search in the Family History Library Catalog for a particular state, county, or town, and then look under the topic "Vital Records."

Locating Records not at the Family History Library

Birth, marriage, and death records may be obtained by contacting or visiting state offices of vital records or the appropriate clerk's office in a town or county courthouse. Genealogical societies, historical societies, and state archives may also have copies or transcripts. To protect the rights of privacy of living persons, most modern records have restrictions on their use and access.

Current addresses and fees for obtaining vital records are easily obtained from the Internet.

Where to Write for Vital Records: Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Divorces is available from the National Center for Health Statistics at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>

Vital record ordering information is also available from the following websites: www.vitalrec.com and <http://www.vitalchek.com>. Vitalcheck.com will assist you in obtaining a vital record for a fee in addition to the cost of the record.

The following website provides links to websites (some of which are subscription sites) that provide information regarding birth and marriage records for all the states: **Online Birth & Marriage Records Indexes for the USA: A genealogy guide for finding vital records**. The website address is: <http://www.germanroots.com/vitalrecords.html>

A companion site for death records is entitled: **Online Searchable Death Indexes and Records: A genealogy guide**. It includes obituaries, cemeteries, and the Social Security Death Index. The website address is: <http://www.deathindexes.com/>

Several vital record collections are available online through the **Historical Records Collections at FamilySearch**. The majority of these collections consist of both searchable indexes and digital images. The **FamilySearch** record collections can be accessed at the following website address: <http://www.familysearch.org>

A website maintained by "The Family History Research Group" (a commercial genealogy company) is called **ProGenealogists**. It provides links to vital records and indexes as well as cemetery sites. Some of the links are to subscription sites. They also provide links to the states in **USGenWeb**. Many genealogical and historical societies maintain databases with vital record information. These websites can usually be obtained through the state and county links in **USGenWeb**. The U.S. website link to **ProGenealogists** is: <http://www.progenealogists.com/genealogysleuthb.htm>

Ancestry.com is a subscription website that contains hundreds of vital record databases, mostly indexes that can lead you to obtaining a copy of the actual record. Their website is:
www.ancestry.com.



“Why didn’t my ancestor naturalize?”

Navigating U.S. Naturalization Records

Danielle Batson, AG®, MLS

Naturalization is the process by which a native or citizen of one country becomes a citizen of a different country. Immigrants to the United States have never been required to apply for citizenship. Some began the naturalization process to become a citizen, but never completed it. This class will teach the process of naturalization, relevant time periods, records, and websites.

Colonial Period to 1790

British immigrants were automatically citizens of the colonies. Non-British immigrants could naturalize to obtain rights within the colony. In the early colonial time period you might find a list of people naturalized, or a court record that included the country of origin, the date of naturalization, and the place of residence

Types of Naturalization

- Denization—naturalization for land ownership purposes, with no political privileges.
- Oath of Allegiance—renouncing loyalty to one’s former country to gain full privileges.
- Collective citizenship—the act of naturalizing a group. In 1776, the Continental Congress granted citizenship to all those living in the colonies who were loyal to the new government. There is no paperwork for collective naturalization.

Colonial Naturalization Index (index to published naturalization records): Filby, P. William, **Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1500s–1900s**, 15 vols. (Detroit, Michigan: Gale Research, 1981–). Available: www.ancestry.com (up to 2012).

1790 to 1906 Time Period

1790 Naturalization Law

The first federal naturalization law was passed in 1790. The basic requirements were a one-year residency in the state, a two-year residency in the United States, good moral character, and the performance of the naturalization in a court of record. Although laws changed throughout the years, generally an immigrant was required to reside in the state for one year and in the United States for a total of five years to become a citizen.

Declaration of Intention

Immigrants could file a declaration of intention immediately after they arrived, although, many waited one to three years. There was a three-year waiting requirement (which changed to two years after 1824) between filing the declaration of intention and the petition. The process starts with the immigrant filling out a declaration of intention, or first papers. This could be done at the age of 18 or 21 (depending on the law at the time), or at any time in their adult life. Any court could be used—often the immigrant chose the most convenient court.

Petition

The second step of the process required the immigrant to petition the court for citizenship. This required a second document known as a petition, also called the final or second papers. The petition and the declaration may be filed in different courts or states. Depositions were often filed to attest to the immigrant's moral character.

Oath of Allegiance

To complete the naturalization process, the immigrant took the oath of allegiance. A certificate of naturalization was then given to the immigrant and the court retained the certificate stub. The petition and certificate of naturalization were always recorded in the same court.

Content of Naturalization Records (1790–1906)

The content of naturalization records in this time period might include the port of arrival, date of immigration, country of origin, and age of the applicant. Forms were not standardized in this time period and each court used their own forms. Thus, information varied widely.

After 1906

Immigration and Naturalization Service

The year 1906 was a turning point for naturalization records. New laws were passed and naturalization forms were standardized. More federal courts naturalized immigrants. The law required that the courts send duplicate copies of naturalization records to the newly created Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization—later changed to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). In March 2004, the INS was renamed the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The process for naturalization has remained similar to before 1906.

Content of Naturalization Records After 1906

After 1906, the following information may be found in naturalization records: Age, birth date, birthplace, residence, date of application, last foreign address, country of birth or allegiance, occupation, personal description, port and date of arrival, vessel of arrival, marital status, birth dates and birthplaces of spouse and children, and date and place the declaration was filed.

Records with U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS)

C-Files

All persons naturalized between 1906 and 1956 have a C-File with the INS. The C-Files include a copy of the declaration, petition, certificate of naturalization, and other documents. Files can be obtained from the USCIS genealogy program.

Alien Registration Form

Created between 1940 and 1944. The original forms were destroyed, but USCIS has microfilm copies, which may be obtained through a genealogy index

Information on Naturalization Records				
	Before 1906		After 1906	
Data	Declaration	Petition	Declaration	Petition
Name	★	★	★	★
Age		★(rarely)	★	
Birth info			★	★
Residence		★	★	★
Application date	★	★	★	★
Last foreign Address			★	★
Country of Birth or Allegiance	★	★	★	★
Occupation			★	★
Personal Description			★	★
Port & Date of Arrival	★ (rarely)	★(rarely)	★	★
Vessel & port of embarkation			★	★
Marital Status			★	★
Name of wife & children			★	★
Birth info of wife & children			★	★
Address of adult children			★	★
Where & when declaration filed				★
Witness affidavits				★

search at <http://www.uscis.gov>. The forms contain the individual's name, address, date of birth, nationality, marital status, physical description, port and date of arrival, and occupation.

Alien Files or A-Files

These files go from 1944 to 1951. For immigrants not yet naturalized, the files contain visas, photographs, affidavits, and correspondence. For those that naturalized, the file can include alien registration form, declaration, and petition. **Aliens born before 1913: Records now at Kansas City National Archives Branch and San Bruno National Archives Branch. Use the National Archives Catalog to search for a name: <https://www.archives.gov/research/catalog>**

Visa Files

Visa files began with the Immigration Act of 1924. All unnaturalized persons had to have a visa to enter the United States. Visa files contain the individual's birth information, names of parents and children, previous residence, and a photograph. Visa files between 1924 and 1944, can be obtained through the USCIS genealogy program.

Registry Files

Registry files were created for unnaturalized persons who arrived before 1924, when no arrival record was found. Registry files contain employment records, a certificate of registry, and proof of residence. Files from 1929 to 1944, are available through the USCIS genealogy program.

Naturalization Exceptions – Explaining Lack of Naturalization Records

Collective Naturalization

Groups of people were granted citizenship by an act of Congress as new territories were acquired. This exception is called collective naturalization. Collective naturalization was used in 1868 to make African-Americans citizens and in 1924 to make Native Americans citizens. No records exist for people who naturalized by collective naturalization.

Women and Children

Both women and children received citizenship from either a father or a husband who was naturalized through **derivative citizenship**. Derivative citizenship began for women in 1855, and for children in 1790. In 1824, children of unnaturalized persons could submit a declaration and petition at the same time to be naturalized if they had lived in the U.S. three years before age 21, and stayed in the U.S. until age 23. Their records were often called "minor's records." After 1804, if a father or husband filed a declaration but died before filing a petition, the widow and children could become citizens by taking an oath of allegiance. In 1922, women were no longer eligible for derivative citizenship. Between 1907 and 1922, women lost their U.S. Citizenship if they married an unnaturalized man. In 1936, the law changed and these women could regain their U.S. citizenship if the marriage ended by divorce or death by filling out an application and taking the Oath of Allegiance, thus, bypassing the full naturalization process. By 1940, those women who were still married, could also regain their citizenship through this process.

Military

Special dispensation was given to those in the military seeking naturalization. In 1862, the U.S. Army waived the declaration and required only one year of residence instead of five years for soldiers honorably discharged. The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps followed suit in 1894. In 1918, during World War I, both the declaration and the residency requirements were waived, and soldiers were naturalized at military posts.

How to Find Naturalization Records

After 1906, most naturalization occurred in federal courts. Be sure to also search other courts in this time period as the transition to federal courts was slow in some areas of the United States.

Since jurisdiction was not an issue for pre-1906 naturalization, people usually chose the most convenient city, county, state, or federal court.

Naturalization Index and Record Collections Online

- FamilySearch – type, “Naturalization” into the “Filter by collection name” field, free: https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/list#page=1®ion=UNITED_STATES
- Fold3 – listed under “Non-military Collections,” \$: <http://fold3.com>
- Ancestry – \$: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/category.aspx?cat=115>
- Online Searchable Naturalization Records and Indexes – links to \$ and free websites: <http://www.germanroots.com/naturalization.html>
- Digital State Archives – free: <http://www.digitalstatearchives.com>

Ordering Naturalization Records

- District Court records (declarations and petitions): **National Archives and Regional Archives** – shows holdings and cost of records; regional branches have naturalization records usually from district courts; some branches have indexes online: <http://www.archives.gov/research/naturalization/index.html>
- USCIS A-files:
 - **National Archives** – Kansas City, MO: <http://www.archives.gov/kansas-city/finding-aids/subject-list.html#naturalization>
 - **National Archives** – San Francisco, CA (San Bruno): <http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/a-files-san-francisco.html>
- USCIS files (all but A-files): **USCIS** – Only after 1906; Order online or by mail an index search and later obtain records through the Genealogy Program: <http://www.uscis.gov/genealogy>
- Naturalization records (declarations and petitions): **FamilySearch Libraries and Centers** – Films may be ordered into centers; Use the FamilySearch Catalog (formerly called FHLC) “Place Search” for the state, county, or city and the topics, “Naturalization & Citizenship–Indexes” and “Naturalization & Citizenship”: <https://familysearch.org/catalog-search>
- FamilySearch wiki - more information about U.S. naturalization: http://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/United_States_Naturalization_and_Citizenship

Census Clues about Naturalization

Naturalization Information Listed on Each Census								
Information on Census	1820-1840	1850-1860	1870	1880	1900-1910	1920	1930	1940
Aliens not naturalized	X				X	X		
Birthplace of Individual		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Birthplace of Parents				X	X	X	X	
Year of Immigration					X	X	X	
Naturalization Status			X		X	X	X	X
Year of Naturalization						X		
Length of Residence in Country					X			

1900 to 1930 Federal census:

- PA = 1st papers filed, declaration
- AL = alien, no papers filed
- NA = naturalized
- NR = not reported

1940 Federal census:

- 0 = Born in US
- 1 = Foreign born, naturalized
- 2 = Foreign born, has first papers
- 3 = Foreign born, alien
- 4 = Foreign born, U.S. Citizen at Birth

© 2017 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reprinted or reproduced in any form for any purpose without prior written permission.



FamilySearch Research Wiki: What it Can Do for You!

Danielle Batson, AG®, MLS

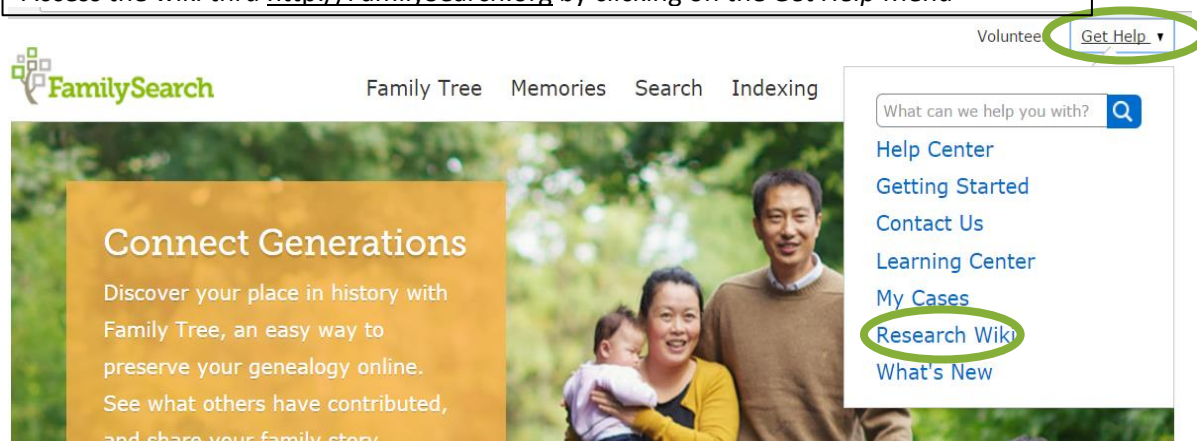
WHAT IS THE WIKI?

The Research Wiki is a free, online genealogical guide that lists websites, explains records, gives research strategies, and suggests other resources to help you find your ancestors from countries around the world. The Research Wiki is a community project, and anyone can contribute to it.

HOW TO ACCESS:

- Wiki.FamilySearch.org
- Or, enter through FamilySearch.org from Search menu or Get Help menu

Access the wiki thru <http://FamilySearch.org> by clicking on the *Get Help* Menu



Family History Research Wiki

Get genealogical research advice, or learn where to find record collections in our [82,871](#)



On the Wiki main page, type in a location or a genealogy subject in the search field. Examples: New York or England Census. You can also click on the map.

WHAT CAN YOU FIND IN THE WIKI?

- Genealogy databases and online resources
- Genealogy strategies and guidance
- Explanation of genealogy record types and their uses
- Locality pages for countries, states, counties and parishes with relevant resources
- Topic pages about genealogy, such as, Organize Your Genealogy

TIPS TO USING THE WIKI:

- **DO SEARCH BY LOCATION:** Search the Research Wiki by location, such as a country, state, county, or parish.
- **DON'T LOOK BY NAME:** You won't find information about individuals in the Wiki, but you will find links to databases that may contain information about your ancestor.
- **USE LINKS TO DATABASES:** The Research Wiki links to free and subscription databases and includes large databases as well as small local databases.
- **TO NAVIGATE:** Navigate by using the Wiki Search box, breadcrumbs, Table of Contents links, and internal links.
- **CONTRIBUTE:** Anyone can contribute or help maintain the Research Wiki. If you find a broken URL link, you can edit the page and fix the link. Or, if you find a red link, which indicates a blank page, you can add information about that topic right on the page.
- **WORK IN PROGRESS:** The Wiki is a work in progress! Keep coming back to the Research Wiki to see what information is added. If it's not there today, a link to the database with your missing ancestor may be in there tomorrow!

MAJOR FEATURES OF THE WIKI:

- Online Genealogy Records pages – for country and states with links to free and paid websites
 - https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Online_Genealogy_Records_by_Location
- “How to Find” pages – for birth, marriage, and death by US states
 - Found on the state pages, for example, Ohio Genealogy under “Getting Started”
- African American Genealogy pages – pages by state
 - https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/African_American
- American Indian Genealogy pages – pages for tribes by state, Bureau of Indian Affairs offices, Agency records, and other resources
 - https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/American_Indian_Genealogy
- Record Selection Tables – gives you records you should search to obtain specific information
 - https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Category:Record_Selection_Tables



Canada Vital Records

Russell Lynch, AG®

The civil registration of birth, marriage, and death events create excellent records for family history research. The records contain both direct and indirect evidence about families.

About Vital Records

Civil governments create records of births, marriages, and deaths, commonly called “vital records” because they refer to critical events in a person’s life. Some provinces refer to the records as “civil registration”, the term generally used outside North America.

Vital records are an excellent source of accurate names, dates, and places of birth, marriages, and deaths.

Vital records are the responsibility of the provinces except for the registration of First Nations individuals, which is a federal responsibility. In some provinces, authorities began registering births, marriage, and deaths since the 1860s. Complete registration in all the provinces and territories was achieved in the 1920s. After this date, almost all individuals who lived in Canada are recorded.

FamilySearch has searchable indexes (online) for the provinces of British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island. The published church records for Québec and Saskatchewan are a substitute record for civil registration in those provinces.

Finding Families

Because there is no national index, it’s useful to know the province in which the family lived. Census records and city directories can narrow the geographic location.

The provinces will restrict access to recent vital records based on privacy law. Vital records that are within the privacy time period must be requested from the Vital Statistics Agency.

Searchable Vital Records on FamilySearch

Province	Birth Records	Marriage Records	Death Records
British Columbia	1854-1903	1859-1932, 1937-1938	1872-1986
New Brunswick	1810-1906	1789-1950	1815-1938
Newfoundland	1840-1915	1887-1922	1891-1949
Nova Scotia	1837-1904	1907-1932	1890-1957
Ontario	1869-1912	1869-1927	1869-1937
Prince Edward Island	1721-1885 (baptisms)	1832-1888	1721-1905

Each province began registering births, marriages, and deaths at different times. The record availability varies throughout Canada.

Information in Vital Records

The information recorded in civil records of vital registration varied over time. Later records generally give more complete information. Vital records in Canada are usually written in English or French.

Birth records (**naissances**) generally give the child's name, gender, date and place of birth, and names of parents. Later records may also give the name of the hospital, age of the parents, occupation of the father, marital status of the mother, and the number of other children born to the mother.

Marriage records (**mariages**) include registers, licenses, contracts, bonds, and intents. Marriages were usually recorded where the bride resided. Marriage registers give the date of marriage, names of the bride and groom, the place of marriage, notes if the bride or groom was single or widowed, and the names of witnesses. They may also give ages of the bride and groom, residences, occupations, names of parents, and the name of a person giving consent.

Death records (**décès**) were usually registered within a few days of the death in the town or city where the person died. There are often civil death records for people who have no birth or marriage record. Early death records generally give the name, date, and place of death. Twentieth-century certificates usually also include: age, race, residence or street address, occupation, cause of death, burial information, name of spouse, name of parents, and the informant's name.

When a Vital Record Does Not Exist

Other records may substitute when a civil vital record does not exist. Some substitutes are not as accurate as those kept by church authorities and local or provincial governments.

See Also

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Canada_Vital_Records The FamilySearch Research Wiki has many articles on Canadian vital records.



Descendancy Research

Tim Bingaman, AG®, Research Specialist
bingamantd@familysearch.org

Descendancy research can add a new dimension to your family history research. If you have a brick wall problem, bring your research forward. You will meet distant relations who may share an interest in your research and may supply information that will help you break through that tough research problem. Descendancy research can also improve your research skills. Most importantly, your living relations may have family artifacts or pictures that can bring your family history to life.

WHY WOULD ONE CONDUCT DESCENDANCY RESEARCH?

First of all, it's fun! In one instance, a woman learned that the lady who cut and styled her hair was a distant cousin. She did not know this prior to descendancy research. Trips to the salon became more fun! By researching an ancestral couple, you will discover new family members with whom you share a common ancestry. You will begin to realize your family members are more numerous than you thought. Discovering your extended family members will give you a better idea of the whole family experiences. You can learn about their trials and tribulations, how they interacted with each other and how their life experience shaped their character.

1. Find all ancestral relatives who have no descendants. You are trying to build a complete picture of the family, not just gather information on direct line family members. Plus, information found on these individuals may assist in locating additional descendants. These include those who:
 - Died as children
 - Never married
 - If married, didn't have children
2. Locate living relatives of a common ancestor. These living relatives may be conducting research. They may provide additional details and information about your family. If distant relations have pictures, ask if you can have copies, and offer to pay for any costs. Pictures are wonderful because you can put a face to the names and dates you have stared at for years. Also, your distant relations may be researching the same lines and you can coordinate your efforts.
3. Discover original and copied family artifacts. Family memorabilia may not be in your family, but certainly may be in collateral descending lines. Probate records may give clues as to who inherited family heirlooms, such as:
 - Family bibles.
 - Photographs are usually the first to go. When a parent or grandparent dies, individuals begin to go through the belongings of the deceased. Inevitably, pictures are discovered and many of those pictures are not identified. The younger generation may have no idea of the identity of individuals in the photos. So where do the photos end up? In the garbage. In one instance, a young woman was going through her mother's belongings in

the attic. She found a farm picture, which she had not seen before, with two individuals standing in front of the farm house. She contacted me, and I was able to identify the gentleman standing in front of the house as her third great-grandfather.

- Documents
- Certificates
- Newspaper clippings
- Letters
- Funeral cards
- Family Stories

4. Contact family members in the following ways:

- Interviews
- Phone calls
- Letters
- E-mails
- Internet

DECIDING WHICH ANCESTRAL COUPLE TO BEGIN YOUR DESCENDANCY RESEARCH MAY BE CRUCIAL.

Choosing a couple from the mid-to-late nineteenth century is usually a good place to start. There are usually more records available for that time period. Another consideration is how many children were born to the ancestor. Usually, a family that has between five to seven children is a good candidate. If you choose a couple too early in time, prior to 1800, the task may become overwhelming. You may want to try:

1. An emigrant ancestor
2. A famous or infamous ancestor
3. A military ancestor
4. An ancestor whose lineage is questionable. This would be an individual that is your brick wall problem. Descendancy research may assist in breaking through that brick wall.

SURVEY DATABASES, BOOKS AND OTHER SOURCES TO SEE IF PREVIOUS RESEARCH HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

When beginning ancestral research, one of the first steps is to see if any research has been completed on that particular line. The same is true for descendancy research. Check for family histories on the Internet or in published materials to see if someone has already researched the family line. Search lineage-linked databases to determine if others have posted information that link into the lines which you are researching. While many of books and databases may not be complete or sourced, they can still be used as guides to direct your research.

1. Internet
 - Lineage-linked databases (Family Tree, Ancestry, Rootsweb, etc.)
 - Social Security Death Index
 - Genealogical web pages and blogs
 - Commemorative publications
2. County or town histories
3. Family histories

4. Newspapers
 - Obituaries
 - Marriages and anniversaries
 - Pioneers

WHAT RECORDS SHOULD YOU USE?

In descendency research you use many of the same records that are used for ancestral research. However, instead of looking for clues to extend your pedigree, you want to identify the children from a particular couple. Census records are usually the best place to start. You can start with the 1850 federal census and usually trace the male descendants with little difficulty. The female lines are a bit more difficult, and you will have to check marriage records to obtain their married surnames. The Social Security Death Index, for those who died 1962 or later, is very useful to determine date of death. Once a date of death is known, search newspapers for obituaries. The obituaries will usually name survivors of the deceased. Once the survivor's names are known, depending on time period, you can search the Social Security Death Index for their death date to find an obituary, or check on-line people finder and phone directory sites. If the descendant is living, it will be time to make that phone call.

1. Family histories
2. Census
3. Marriage
4. Church
5. Newspapers
6. Probate
7. Land
8. On-line databases
 - Steve Morse website
 - Phone directories
 - People finder sites
 - Facebook
 - FamilyTreeNow

CALLING DISTANT RELATIONS CAN BE FUN AND FRIGHTENING.

At some point you will need to call a distant relation. While you share a common ancestry with the individual, you have never met nor previously spoken with them. This could be an uncomfortable experience because you do not know how they will respond to you. Tell them who you are and that you would like to talk about the "Jones" family history. Ask them if they have time to talk and if they are interested. If they are not interested, thank them for their time and move on. Usually, people who are not interested will be too timid to give you any information. Many times the older the individual the more willing they are to talk. They are grateful for the conversation, as few people visit them. A few things you should do when contacting individuals are:

1. Identify yourself.
2. Tell the distant relative why you are calling.
3. Tell the distant relative what your relationship is to them.
4. Share information.

THESE WEBSITES MAY BE HELPFUL.

Below are just a few sites that can assist you with descendency research. As you search you will discover additional sites. It is up to the researcher to determine which sites are best for their research. The following are listed in no particular order:

1. <http://genforum.genealogy.com/>
2. <http://news.google.com/newspapers>
3. <http://stevemorse.org/>
4. <http://www.ancestry.com/>
5. <http://www.facebook.com/>
6. <https://www.familysearch.org/>
7. <http://www.findagrave.com/>
8. <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>
9. <http://usgenweb.org/>
10. <http://www.whitepages.com/>
11. <http://www.familytreenow.com/>
12. www.newspapers.com
13. www.familytreenow.com

Descendency research is a way to connect with distant relatives and possibly extend your pedigree. At the same time you may find family artifacts that will add to your knowledge concerning your family history.



Basic United States Land Records

Marilyn Markham AG[®], CGSM, MLS

INTRODUCTION

Land ownership was one of the main attractions for people coming from the “old country.” Land records are unique in their value and use in family history research. This class covers:

- Why Use Land Records?
- Types of Land Transactions
- Land Survey Systems
- Anatomy of a Deed
- Locating Land Records
- Search Strategies

WHY USE LAND RECORDS?

- Land records place an individual in a specific place at a specific time. In addition, land records can indicate where in a county an ancestor owned land.
- Land was so important that the purchase of land was often recorded as soon as possible. Most counties have land records dating back to the earliest settlements.
- Land records may give clues as to where your ancestor came from or where your ancestor moved to upon leaving the county.
- People named together in a deed are often related. When a group sells land together, they are almost always related. Don't forget to research the witnesses.
- Land records often give clues about entire families and may provide names for family members that cannot be found elsewhere.
- When two men with the same name settled in the same county, land records can provide enough detail (spouse, place of residence) so that a careful researcher will be able to distinguish between the two.
- Deeds tend to survive even if few other records are available. Land constituted a family's wealth while providing the government with a tax base. If a courthouse burned, current landowners would often re-record their deeds.
- A high percentage of white males in rural areas owned land.

TYPES OF LAND TRANSACTIONS

There are two major types of land transactions. Transactions that occurred between a government body and an individual (called First Purchase transactions) and transactions that occurred between two individuals (called Person to Person transactions).

A First Purchase transaction happens when land is first purchased from a government or other entity. This could be the federal government (after the American Revolution), a State or Colonial Government, the British Crown, or an intermediary (such as a proprietor). Before an individual could make such a purchase, a survey of the land had to occur. Other vocabulary relating to the survey and purchase of government land include:

Cash Sale: Federal land purchased with cash

Grant: When a government (under English Common Law) gives land to an individual.

Homestead: A piece of land given to an individual(s) upon meeting certain requirements.

Patent: A document issued by the government giving an individual title to a tract of land.

Plat: A map showing the individual tracts of land within a location.

Survey: Defining the boundaries of land tracts.

Tract: A piece of land.

Warrant: A document guaranteeing an individual's right to land.

A Person to Person land transaction takes place when land is sold for a second, third, fourth, etc. time. A person to person transaction can take place between two or more individuals. The person (or group of people) selling the land known as the grantor(s) and the person (or people) purchasing the land are known as the grantee(s). Other related vocabulary includes:

Deed: Instrument for conveying real property or transferring a title.

Grantee: Individual(s) buying land.

Grantor: Individual (s) selling land.

Indenture: See Deed.

Release of Dower: The release of a wife's claim to the land being sold.

LAND SURVEY SYSTEMS

There are two main systems of surveying land in the United States:

Land surveyed as Metes and Bounds was surveyed according to local landmarks, compass readings, distances (usually listed in poles or chains), and neighbors. Initial settlement of land took place before most official surveying occurred, meaning the first settler often defined the boundaries of the land.

Metes and Bounds was used primarily in the State land States (land sold by the States) which are Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia.

Platting Deeds in Metes & Bounds

<http://genealogytools.net/deeds>

Land surveyed after the establishment of the United States was surveyed by the Federal Government before settlement took place and is often called Public Land Survey or the Rectangular Survey. In the Rectangular Survey, land was surveyed according to a baseline and meridian in ever smaller rectangles. See one of the resources listed at the end of this handout for more information.

ANATOMY OF A DEED

Certain pieces of information are usually part of every deed, including:

- The names of the grantor(s) and the grantee(s) will be listed. The grantor is required to sign the deed. The grantee is not. (The deed may also include witnesses).
- The consideration or cost of the land. This may be monetary in nature or, if the land is a gift or inheritance, the consideration may be for "natural love and affection."
- The legal description, which identifies the location of the land within the county. In deeds using metes and bounds, this includes names of neighbors.
- The date the transaction took place as well as the date the transaction was recorded.

Other pieces of information may also be found in deeds. Be on the lookout for the following additional information:

- The spouse of the Grantor/Grantee
- Neighbors, especially in descriptions using Metes and Bounds
- Heirs and other relatives may be named as selling land together.
- Alternate residences including the location from which an individual is moving (if the grantee) or the place to which an ancestor has already moved (if the grantor)
- Occupation and other identifying information including "farmer," "husbandman," "widower," etc.
- History of the land with names of previous owners.

LOCATING LAND RECORDS

Federal Land Records:

- Copies of the records were deposited with the General Land Office and later transferred to the National Archives
- Bounty Land Warrants are on file at the National Archives with many also available online
- Microfilmed copies of the Tract Books are available at the Family History Library
- Some original land purchases have been mapped out and published in book form.
- The Bureau of Land Management has posted images of many original patents. If you find a patent for someone with a Homestead Case File, make sure to order a copy.

County Land Records:

- Original county records are kept on file at the county courthouses.
- FamilySearch has microfilmed many deeds and deed indexes and made them available in the Family History Library

- Some deeds have been abstracted and published by local individuals or genealogical societies.
- When searching the Family History Library Catalog, perform a place search for the county in which your ancestor settled. Under the county, look for the topics:
 - Land and Property
 - Land and Property – Indexes
 - Land and Property – Maps
- Use Abstracts to lead you to the original deeds.

Using Deed Indexes:

Many counties have created grantor and grantee indexes (sometimes called direct and indirect/reverse indexes). Some states have unusual indexes. Make sure to read the instructions on how to locate your ancestors within the index.

Indexes often use abbreviations (et al, etc.) to indicate multiple grantors/grantees or (et ux) to indicate that a wife is also named.

SEARCH STRATEGIES

1. Trace each and every piece of land owned by your ancestor.
 - a. How did you're your ancestor obtain the land?
 - b. How did your ancestor dispose of the land?
 - c. Search several years before and after the time your ancestor was known to be in the county to find additional land purchases.
2. Use Deeds to determine migration patterns
 - a. A deed may indicate the county a grantee is moving from.
 - b. A deed may indicate the county is a grantor has moved to.
3. Other records may indicate that your ancestor owned land, including:
 - a. Census Records
 - b. Probate Records
 - c. Court Records
4. Land Records can lead you to other resources, including:
 - a. Probate Records
 - b. Tax Lists
 - c. City Directories
 - d. Court Records
 - e. Plat Maps
5. Make sure to analyze each piece of land
 - a. The person buying, selling, or witnessing the deed may be a relative

- b. Neighbors named in a deed may give information about your ancestor in their deeds
- c. If there are multiple grantors or grantees, these people are almost always related.
- d. Land history can give information about both purchase and inheritance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.glorecords.blm.gov: includes an index to public land transfers from the federal government, including homesteads, cash entry, and more.

wiki.familysearch.org: search for United States Land and Property.

Hone, E. Wade. Land and Property Research in the United States. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 1997. (FHL book 973 R27h)

Szucs, Loretto Dennis, and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy. 3d ed. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 2006. (FHL book 973 D27ts 2006)



Where There's a Will, There's a Probate

United States Probate Research

Beth Taylor, CGsm

When searching for probate records, many genealogists quit searching after looking for a will. But a will (or the lack of a will) is just the beginning of probate research. In this class, we will introduce probate records, how they are created, what information they contain, and where they can be found.

Probate Basics

What is Probate?

Probate is the process whereby the property and assets of a deceased individual are distributed among his or her heirs. The word probate means "to prove" and originally related to the process of proving a will. Currently probate relates to settling all estates, regardless of whether or not a valid will exists.

Probate has its roots in English Common Law, meaning that the right of probate was never questioned by the early American Colonies. This means that probate records date from when a colony or state was founded. Currently, probate is mandated and probate law is set by each individual state, meaning probate law differ from state to state. Most states have assigned the duties of settling probate to either a county or a district court, usually called a probate court, an orphans court (PA and MD), or a surrogate court (NY)

Genealogical Value of Probate Records

Probate records may include a variety of information about your ancestors, including:

- Relationships, such as spouse, children (included married names of daughters), grandchildren, siblings, nieces, nephews, and so forth
- Date and place of death
- Property ownership
- Socioeconomic status
- Religious affiliation
- Possible relatives (executors, administrators, guardians, witnesses, and bondsmen may all be related to the decedent)

Probate Terminology

- Administrator/Administratrix: individual named by the court to administer the settlement of an estate according to law; an administratrix is female
- Administrator with will annexed: individual named by the court to administer a testate estate when the executor is unable to fill the role
- Bequeath: to will personal (movable) property
- Bondsman: individual(s) who provide security on the signing of a bond (see Surety)

- Codicil: an addendum to an existing will; must be signed, sealed, dated, and witnessed
- Decedent: individual whose estate is being settled
- Devise: to will real property (unmovable) property
- Executor/Executrix: individual(s) named by a testator to execute the terms of a will; an executrix is female
- Guardian: individual named by the court (or by a minor child age 14+) to guard the financial interest of a minor or incompetent individual in the estate
- Intestate Estate: an estate without a valid will
- Personal Property: property that is movable (cupboards, bedding, books)
- Real Property: property that is not movable (house, land, fences)
- Surety: see Bondsman
- Testate Estate: an estate with a valid will
- Valid Will: a will that has been proven in court as having been written by someone of legal age, of sound mind, and without restraint

The Probate Process

Testate Estates

1. A dated, signed, witnessed, and sometimes sealed will is written, naming heirs and an executor
2. The testator passes away
3. The executor(s) file a petition with the probate court to begin the probate process
4. A court date is set
5. Notice of the probate and court date are published in a local paper (or heirs are otherwise notified)
6. On that day and time, the will is presented in court; the witnesses provide evidence and heirs and potential heirs are given the opportunity to contest the will (a valid will must be written by someone of legal age, of sound mind, and free from restraint)
7. If the will is proven, the probate judge issues Letters Testamentary, giving the executor(s) the legal authority to act on behalf of the estate; the executor(s) sign a bond (with two sureties or bondsmen)
8. If the will is considered invalid, the will is thrown out and the estate is now considered intestate

Intestate Estates

1. An individual dies without leaving a valid will
2. Someone interested in the estate (usually a potential heir or a creditor) files a petition or an application for administration to begin the probate process
3. A court date is set
4. Notice of the probate and court date are published in a local paper (or heirs are otherwise notified)
5. In court, the probate judge appoints an administrator and issues Letters of Administration, which gives the administrator the legal authority to act on behalf of the estate; the administrator signs a bond (with two sureties or bondsmen)

Settling the Estate

1. The executor or administrator hires three appraisers to inventory the estate; part of the estate, referred to as the dower, may be set aside at this time for use by the widow; the resulting inventory is filed with the court
2. If an heir (or potential heir) is incompetent or under legal age, a guardian will be appointed

3. Part of the estate may be sold to pay creditors, settle the estate's assets, or provide support for the widow; the bill of sale is filed with the court
4. The executor or administrator may be required to file regular, yearly accountings with the court detailing the payments to and from the estate
5. The executor, heirs, or creditors may instigate a court case at any point during the probate process

Finalizing the Probate

1. The executor or administrator, believing the estate is ready to be settled, files a petition with the court to end the probate
2. A court date is set
3. Notice that the probate is being finalized is published in a local paper (or heirs are otherwise notified)
4. The administrator or executor files a last accounting (final settlement) with the court listing the final distribution of the estate's assets
5. A decree of distribution, detailing the final transfer of property ownership to the heirs, is filed with the recorder's office (more common in the twentieth century)

Probate Records

Throughout the probate process, paperwork was filed with the court. The court clerk would either transcribe these records into a book (such as a will book) or make a note in the probate journal that the records had been presented. The original documents were then bound together in a probate packet or estate file. This means that probate records can be found in two forms: books and packets.

Probate Books

Probate books are compiled by the court clerk. Some probate records, such as wills, bonds and letters may be transcribed word for word into probate books. But many other records may only be referenced in the probate journal when they were presented in court. Probate books are more likely to be microfilmed or digitized. There are many different types of probate books, including will books, bond books, probate journals, probate orders, probate dockets, guardianship books, and probate indexes.

Probate Packets (Estate Files)

All original paperwork filed with the probate court during the probate process was bound together in a single packet or file. Probate packets usually contain the original will, letters, bonds, inventories, bills of sale, receipts, and more. Because packets include all of the records in one place, start with the probate packet when possible. However, packets are less likely to have been microfilmed or digitized and may only be accessible onsite.

Records Created during Probate

Wills

A will is a document written by an individual outlining who should inherit their assets following their death. There are three major types of wills: attested wills (signed, sealed, dated, and witnessed), holographic wills (wills without witnesses), and nuncupative wills (spoken wills). Wills contain a variety of genealogical information, including relationships, property ownership, clues to religious affiliation, and more.

There are some limitations to using wills. Testators were not required to name all of their

children as heirs. Oftentimes, older children who have already received their inheritance will not be named in a will. Also, testators may or may not indicate their relationship to their heirs.

Petitions

Several different petitions are filed during a probate. The petition to begin probate often has the most information of interest to genealogists. In some states (during certain time periods), petitioners were required to name all of the deceased's heirs (or potential heirs), as well as their relationship and current residence. This information was required regardless of whether there was a will or whether the heir was named in the will.

Proving of the Will

Once a will was proven valid, it was recorded (copied) into the court books. Either before or after the will, the court clerk usually included a statement indicating when the will was proven. When no other death date exists, the date provided in the will's proving can be used to determine the approximate date of death.

Letters

Letters of Testamentary (testate estates) or Letters of Administration (intestate estates) were issued by the probate judge and gave the executor or administrator the legal authority to act on behalf of the estate.

Bonds

Most states require that executors, administrators, and guardians sign a bond. A bond is a guarantee that if the executor, administrator, or guardian does not fulfill their duties, they are required to pay a sum, which is usually equal to the estimated worth of the estate. Bonds are signed by two bondsmen or sureties, who are oftentimes related to the person signing the bond.

Guardianships

When a decedent left minor or incompetent heirs, a guardian was appointed to protect the financial interest of that heir in the estate. When a minor was under fourteen years of age, the court chose the guardian. When a minor was fourteen years of age or older, they were allowed to choose their own guardian. Because a guardian was responsible for the financial interest of a child until they reached legal age, guardianship records may cover longer periods of time.

When researching guardianship records, keep in mind that several terms have changed meaning over time. Just because a guardian was appointed doesn't mean both parents were deceased. For example, if a man left property to his daughter's children, a guardian may still be appointed even though both parents were still living. Other terms to be aware of: an infant was someone who had not reached legal age (usually eighteen for women, twenty-one for men) and an orphan was someone who had lost at least one parent (though the other parent may still be living).

Inventories & Appraisements

Before an estate could be settled, the value of the estate had to be determined. Three individuals, usually hired by the executor or administrator, appraised all of the assets of the estate. The final inventory was filed with the court. Inventories can provide rich details about an individual's life and socioeconomic status.

Dower Right

In most states, a widow was entitled to one-third of her husband's estate following his estate. A widow who was named in a will could claim dower in lieu of her inheritance or vice versa. The dower was oftentimes set off during the process of appraising the estate and the real and personal property given to the widow may be detailed as part of the inventory.

Bills of Sale

In order to pay off debts, provide support for the widow and children, and distribute the assets, some of the deceased's property had to be sold, usually at public or private auction. Those who purchased property (as well as what they purchased) was recorded on a bill of sale, which was filed with the court. These names are valuable as they are often family, friends, and neighbors.

Annual Accountings

Administrators (and sometimes executors) were required to annually inform the court of the payments and income from the estate. These accountings often list early distributions to heirs, payments to support the widow and children, names of creditors who the deceased did business with, and more.

Estate Settlements

The final accounting of an administrator or executor is called the final settlement. This document usually specifies the final distribution of property from the estate. Among those receiving property from the estate are the heirs. In an intestate estate, the final settlement is one of the most valuable documents in a probate. All of the heirs (as defined by law) will be named. Those receiving an equal share of the estate will have the same relationship to the deceased.

Decrees of Distribution

Starting at the end of the nineteenth century, a decree was filed with the recorder's office officially transferring the property of the deceased to his or her heirs. Decrees, like final settlements, often name all of the heirs and their inheritance, on one document.

Receipts

As an executor or administrator paid money out of the estate, they collected receipts. These receipts can be grouped into two categories: creditor receipts and heir receipts. Creditor receipts help determine the business relationships of the deceased. Heir receipts may include clues about the heirs including married names, spouses, current residences, and more.

Court Cases

Probate leads to a lot of court cases over many different issues. An executor may take the heirs to court to clarify the terms of a will. An heir may take the executor to court to claim he or she is mishandling funds or to claim the executor's bond is no longer valid due to the death of a surety. Every court case produces more paperwork, which may provide additional genealogical information.

Partitions

Partition is the process of surveying and dividing a piece of land owned jointly by several individuals. Though an official part of the probate process, partition oftentimes results from probate (when several heirs inherit the same, undivided piece of land). Partition is actually a court case started when one owner sues the others. Partition may happen years or even

decades after an estate was settled, but partition records may include the names of all of the heirs as well as their spouses and current residences.

Finding Probate Records

Probate Records Online

Ancestry.com (\$) – Ancestry recently launched a US Wills and Probates collection with indexed records from all fifty states. You can access the collection at www.ancestry.com/will-probate-records.

FamilySearch.org – FamilySearch has digitized probate records from most of the United States, though most of these collections have not yet been indexed. To view these collections, go to Search > Records > Browse all Published Collections and then filter (on the left) to United States and Probate.

Local county genealogical societies, historical societies, archives, or courts may have created indexes for probate records. Use search engines (such as Google or Bing) to locate the websites for these repositories.

Probate Records at the Family History Library

FamilySearch has microfilmed many probate records from around the country. Search the FamilySearch Catalog to discover what probate records are available for a specific locality. On FamilySearch.org, go to Search > Catalog. Do a Place Name search for a county. Choose Probate records and Probate records-index from the topics page. You can also use WorldCat.org to find copies of probate records held by libraries located closer to you.

Probate Records Onsite

Most original probate books and packets are still held at county courthouses or archives (though some have been centralized by states). When visiting a county, start with the probate court. Check first for probate packets. Then use books to fill in the holes left by missing records. Also check the recorder's office for decrees and the county clerk's office for partitions and other court cases. If you are unable to visit a county, contact the local genealogical or historical society and see if they offer a lookup service. Or hire a local researcher who can get the probate records for you.

You can use the FamilySearch Research Wiki to learn more about probate records and their availability. To access the Research Wiki, go to FamilySearch.org and click Search > Wiki. Search for "United States Probate Records," "[state] Probate Records," or "[county] County, [state]".

Research Strategies

Probate is tied to property ownership. If someone owned property at the time of their death, it is likely they left a probate. Individuals who were white, male, and lived in rural areas were most likely to own property. Women who were single, widowed, or divorced, were also more likely to leave probates. To determine whether an ancestor owned property, also check:

- Census records (1850-1870 – value of real estate, 1860-1870 censuses – value of personal estate, 1900-1920 – home owned or rented, 1930-1940 – value of home, if owned)
- Land records
- Tax records

Don't limit your probate searches to only direct ancestors. Other family members may have also

left probate records. Watch especially for probate records for unmarried or childless relatives as their heirs were their siblings and their siblings' children.

If a man died and left everything to his widow, search for a probate for his widow as she may have named the rest of the family.

If your ancestor owned land in multiple locations, check for probate records in all of related counties.

Learn More

FamilySearch Research Wiki (<http://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki>). Search for "United States Probate Records" or "[State] Probate Records."

Greenwood, Val. *Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy, third edition*. (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 2000)

Szucs, Loretto Dennis & Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, editors. **The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy, third edition**. (Provo, UT: Ancestry Publishing Company: 2006)



Tips and Tricks

Using FamilySearch Historical Records Collection

Lyn Rasmussen, Research Specialist

FamilySearch is a free website dedicated to helping people identify their ancestors. Currently there are more than 2.5 million rolls of microfilmed records from countries all over the world available at the Family History Library and many are available at FamilySearch Centers worldwide. Staff and volunteers are working to digitize the microfilm collection as well as capture additional digital images of records housed in libraries and archives throughout the world.

There are more than two thousand digital collections available online at FamilySearch. Many of the collections are indexed, some are unindexed. The FamilySearch Indexing program has a large volunteer workforce helping to index the records.

This presentation will demonstrate how to search the indexed collections and browse the unindexed collections. Unindexed digital collections can be an effective way to find additional information about an ancestor.

Basic Factors

Three main search criteria are coordinating factors in identifying ancestors: Name, Place, and Date. No one person can be in more than one place at one time. Names, places, and dates must converge to produce valid identity or valid results.

Biggest TIP of All: You need a fact for each one of the search criteria to be most successful finding ancestors in Historical Records: Name; Place; Date.

Name

TIPS:

- A person may use several variations of his/her given name during a lifetime, at times using first name, middle name or even initials.
- Surnames have many variant spellings depending on time, place, and other circumstances.

TRICKS:

- Consider appropriate name variations according to time and place. Try searches using these and other variations.
- Searching with common misspellings of the name is a good strategy.
- It is helpful to create a list of variant spellings and have it handy. Keep an open mind.
- Use alternate websites to get ideas for possible name variants – e.g. <http://forebears.io/surnames>.

- Use the * wildcard to replace vowels or consonants to search for possible variant name spellings: Question mark (?) replaces one character; Asterisk (*) replaces zero or more characters.
- Use additional names in the “other” category on the Historical Records search page.

Place

TIPS:

- Place names may have changed over time for various historical and political reasons.
- Sometimes the spelling of a place was not accurately recorded.

TRICKS:

- Consider appropriate name variations according to time and place.
- Use the * wildcard to replace vowels or consonants to search for possible variant place name spellings.
- Use alternate websites to get ideas for possible place name variants – e.g. fuzzy gazetteer at <http://isodp.hof-university.de/fuzzyg/query/>

Date

TIPS:

- Dates are often recorded in a variety of ways and with varying accuracy. Sometimes different calendar systems are used – e.g. the Napoleonic calendar.
- A person’s age will vary depending on the time of year a record was created.
- Sometimes historical records may be off by a year or more from the date the you have in your family records.
- Birthdays were not as celebrated as they are today. It was not uncommon for a person to be unaware of his/her exact birthday.

TRICKS:

- Using a date range is helpful. Enter a year range from 5 to ten years to include any possible date variations.
- Use other websites for information about possible historical, political calendric variances.

FamilySearch Historical Records

Indexed Records

FamilySearch has many collections that are indexed, or name searchable. When searching in Historical Records from the main page titled “Search Historical Records” you are searching indexed records only.

Go to www.familysearch.org From the home page choose “Search.” Clicking on Search opens the Historical Records search page. From this page, there are four ways to begin searching indexed collections:

1. Search Historical Records
2. Research By Location

3. Find a Collection
4. Browse all published collections

1. Search Historical Records

To begin using Search Historical Records, use the data entry boxes under Search Historical Records. A search from this page will search all indexed collections.

Deceased Ancestor's Name

Enter the name into the data entry boxes. Use the **Tips** and **Tricks** for Name searches.

Search with a life event

Enter events facts into the data entry boxes. Use the **Tips** and **Tricks** for Place searches.

Limit the number of hits in your search by entering some of the following:

TIPS:

- A broad search may bring up too many matches making it difficult to identify your ancestor correctly. Using the event boxes is an effective tool for narrowing down, or filtering, the search.
- Filtering with too much information may cause a search which eliminates the record you want. Enter the information that pertains to the record you are seeking, ex. a death date will not help in a census search, but "lived in" or "residence" would be very important.

Search with a relationship

Enter relationship facts that are pertinent to the type of event you are searching for, ex. enter the spouse name when searching for a marriage record. Use the **Tips** and **Tricks** for Name searches.

Restrict records by

In this section filter By Location, Type, Batch Number or Film Number.

Research Strategy for indexed records

1. Start with the surname.
2. Add details such as given name, birth date. Keep the details to search-specific items (i.e. no death date if searching for birth date)
3. If desired results are not found, refine your search. Change the search parameters and search again. Click "Update" button each time.
4. Use filters to narrow the search. You can add and remove as many filters as needed.
5. Try narrowing the search to a specific collection. Collections are listed under "Restrict records by:" Repeat the process using variations of details and filters.
6. Add relationships and add life events. Continue to repeat process clicking the "Update" button each time.

TIPS:

- keep track of the search criteria you have used, both successful and unsuccessful. This may help you with future searches.

2. Research By Location

To begin a search by locality, use the Search page map of the world. Click on a continent and a selection box will appear. From the selection box choose a smaller jurisdiction, such as a country, state, parish, or province.

TIPS:

- Once you have chosen a smaller locality (state for example) search all indexed collections for this locality using the data entry boxes.
- Use the instructions under Search Historical Records in the preceding section for tips on adding Deceased Ancestor's Name, Life Event and Relationship.

Filter by collection

Underneath the search fields is a place where to Filter by collection. The top five collections are listed with a box to check on the left. There is also a place to choose "Show all [87] Collections" (or whatever the current number is).

3. Find a Collection

To begin a search by collection title enter the title in the "Collection Title" data entry box.

TRICKS:

- As you begin to type in the collection title the list of titles will appear below. Choose from the selections.

When choosing to search from "Research By Location" and selecting the place from the world map you are searching indexed records only in that chosen locality.

Identifying indexed record types

<input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Births and Christenings, 1812-1965	10,634	21 Nov 2013	← Index only, no image
<input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Church Marriages, 1860-1976	542	06 Dec 2016	← Index and image
<input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Civil War Service Records of Confederate Soldiers, 1861-1865	532,541	20 Apr 2012	← Index and image on a partner website
<input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Civil War Service Records of Union Soldiers, 1861-1865	158,093	20 Apr 2012	
<input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Death Index, 1914-1950	594,114	23 Jan 2012	

TIPS:

- Use a broad search. Don't fill in every box of a search page—using less information often gives better results.
- Use a date range. Don't use exact years in a search, add 2-5 year range.
- Use alternate spellings, abbreviations, and nicknames.
- Use exact searches. Checking the box to the right of the name, date, or place is a exact search. Leaving a box unchecked is a broad search.

Unindexed Records or Browsable Collections

FamilySearch has many digitized historical record collections that have not been indexed. These records can be accessed online, most of them from home. Because they are unindexed the process to search them is often page by page. Don't ignore these collections, despite the time it takes to use them as they can be very useful.






There are two ways to locate the Browse only collections.

1. Historical Records page using "Browse all published collections"
2. FamilySearch Catalog

1. Browse all published collections

To browse all published collections, click on the blue link "Browse all published collections." This search brings up an alphabetical list of all record collections, both indexed and unindexed.

Go to www.familysearch.org, choose Search and then Records. Click on the blue link at the bottom right to "Browse all published collections." The specific collections with the notation "Browse Images" are the unindexed digitized collections.

Alabama State Census, 1855	34,978	12 Dec 2011	
Alabama State Census, 1866	243,781	12 Dec 2011	
 Alabama, Census of Confederate Veterans, 1907, 1921, 1927	20,403	21 Dec 2016	← Indexed collection
 Alabama, Freedmen's Bureau Field Office Records, 1865-1872	Browse Images	07 Jul 2014	
 Alabama, Jefferson County Circuit Court Papers, 1870-1916	Browse Images	14 Aug 2012	← "Browse Images" indicates unindexed collection
 Alabama, Madison County Chancery and Circuit Court Records, 1829-1968	Browse Images	26 Jun 2014	
 Alabama, Mobile Magnolia Cemetery Interment Cards, 1836-1995	32,735	22 Apr 2015	

TIPS:

- Choose a specific collection by name. The list is alphabetical.
- Choose records with "Browse Images" for unindexed record sets.
- Choosing the country will bring up a list of smaller jurisdictions along with date ranges and collections that are tailored to the country.

TRICKS:

- Filter the Historical Record Collections list. Use the Place, Date and Collections on the left to filter.
- Using the "Filter by collection" name box at the top filters the search. Try entering a locality (such as Delaware) or subject (such as Land). These terms can be combined to further narrow the collections.
- Use the "Availability" check box to filter your selections to "only collections with images."

2. FamilySearch Catalog

All collections, including digital collections, available at FamilySearch are listed in the FamilySearch Catalog. Using the Catalog is one of the most effective ways to locate and search digital record sets. This presentation will demonstrate how to find digitized records through the Catalog.

Go to www.familysearch.org, choose Search and then “Catalog” from the drop-down menu. This is the Catalog search page. Here you can search by Place, Surnames, Titles, Author, Subjects, Keywords, Call Number and Film/Fiche number. The most common type of search is the “Place” search. The page defaults to the Place search. Enter in the locality you want to find records for your ancestor in.

Locating Digital Records through the Catalog


- As you type in the locality standardized place names will begin to appear. Choose from this standardized list and then click on “Search.”
- From the search results page choose the record subject (ex. probate, church, etc.).
- Next, choose the specific record collection within the records subject.

Notes

Arkansas Probate Records are available online, [click here](#).

If you see this red link in the “Notes” section the record set is digital. Click on “[here](#)”

Film Notes (This family history center has 44 of 44 films/fiche.)				
Note	Location	Collection/Shelf	Film/DGS	Format
Probate case files: Abney, Elizabeth - Awtrey, Cephas Lee (cont.)	Granite Mountain Record Vault	United States & Canada Film	2404201	
Probate case files: (cont.) Awtrey, Cephas Lee - Bean, Roscoe	Granite Mountain Record Vault	United States & Canada Film	2405935	

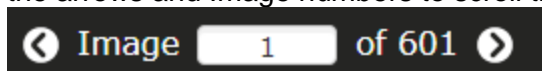
If the camera icon is in the format column the collection is digital. Click on the 

TIPS and TRICKS for viewing the Browsable Collections from the Historical Record Collection page or from the FamilySearch Catalog

- After clicking on “Browse Images,” you will see a list of jurisdictions or record sets that are part of the collection.
- Choose the jurisdiction or record set you are interested in seeing. This will display the first image of the record set.
- Closing the Image Index will make the image viewing space larger.

Navigating the images

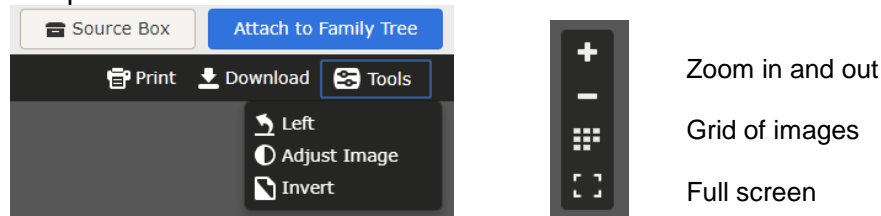
Use the black navigation bar (just above the image) to navigate through the images. Use the arrows and Image numbers to scroll through the current record set.



Use the collection title to choose a different record set.

Arkansas Probate Records, 1817-1979 ▾ | Benton > Chancery Court records 1843-1882 vol A-B >

As you browse through the images, use the Tools to enhance them. You can download and print too.



To return to the main FamilySearch page and choose a different collection, click the FamilySearch icon at the top of the page.

Best **TIPS** from FamilySearch US & Canada Research Team

- Identify one individual you want to find information about so you don't get sidetracked.
- Create a research log as you go. Paper or digital.
- Keep a research log so you know what collections were searched and the day they were searched. This will help to identify whether a collection has been updated.
- Never believe you will remember where you have searched for your ancestor. Write it down!
- When scanning an image into your USB drive title it with the complete citation.
- Include NIL searches, where you did not find any information about your ancestor.
- Bookmark websites you want to use again to find other ancestors.
- Copy the URL of the images you find and add them as sources to your tree and on your research log.
- Study the first few pages of a collection to determine how the collection is organized and whether the record set has its own internal index.
- Once you find an ancestor, scroll through the pages before and after to see if the record has multiple pages. Don't miss out on page 2.
- Even if the record set has a name searchable index still look at the images to verify that the person you are seeking is not in the index.
- When you find the image make a copy so you don't have to spend time looking for it again.
- Ignore the initial search box and search by collection.
- Check the state collections for the state you are searching in.

- Always write the collection name and other identifying information on your document.
- Always view the image, not just the index.
- Read the record multiple times.
- Keep good notes. Always.
- Check back often to see what new collections are available to search or browse.
- Learn about the source.
- Become familiar with the history of the county you will research.
- Join a Genealogical Society in your ancestor's area.
- City directories can be very helpful. Don't forget them.
- Believe that your ancestor is not the only one in the area with the name.



Quebec Research

Yvonne Sorenson, AG®

There are many great resources to use in order to be successful in searching for your ancestors in Quebec. This class will help you learn about Quebec research including what records to search, what they contain, how to access them, and how to be successful even if you don't read French.

OBJECTIVES

- Outline historical background
- Explain naming practices unique to Quebec
- Describe finding aids
- Discuss the major record types, what they contain, and where to start
- Define other records to search
- Identify internet resources

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1660–1763—Canada or New France formed
- 1763—New France turned over to Great Britain
- 1774–1784—Province of Quebec established
- 1791–1841—Name changed to Lower Canada
- 1841–1867—Name changed to Canada East
- 1867—Name changed to Province of Quebec

NAMING PRACTICES

- Maiden Names—Women kept their maiden names in official records, so look for death records for women under their maiden names.
- Spelling Variations—spellings were not standardized until recently. The names were spelled phonetically. French has some silent letters so pronunciation and spelling varies.
- Anglicized names—If an ancestor moved to the United States, their names may have been translated or anglicized in records. For example, Lamoureux to Lamora, Chartier to Carter, Roy to King, and Poissant to Fish.
- Dit Names (or Alias Surnames)—Dit=He is named or called. Second surnames to distinguish families with common surnames or different branches of the same family. Families may have adopted the dit name as the family name and dropped the original surname.
Dit Names help at: www.afgs.org/ditnames/index1.html
- Given Names—Children usually had several different names. If a child died young, another child may have been given the same name.

For help with names, see the FamilySearch Research Wiki at https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Canada_Names,_Personal

FINDING AIDS

FamilySearch Research Wiki

https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Quebec,_Canada_Genealogy

French Word Lists

https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/French_Genealogical_Word_List

French-English dictionary or Google translate

Maps

FamilySearch.org Records <https://familysearch.org/search>

FamilySearch Catalog <https://familysearch.org/catalog/search>

Ancestry.com

Drouin Collection <http://search.ancestryinstitution.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1091>

Marriage Indexes such as Loiselle's Marriage Index

Genealogical Dictionaries such as Jette's or Tanguay's

GETTING STARTED

1. Search census records—census records show religion starting with the 1851 census
2. Determine if the ancestor was Catholic or Protestant
 - a. Look for surname hints—Did they have a French or Irish surname? If so, they may have been Catholic
 - b. Look for locality hints—Did they live in French counties or English counties?
3. If in English counties, search for Protestant Church Records in the town or county of residence
4. If they were Catholic, search church records available online at Ancestry and FamilySearch. If not found online, search microfilm church and notarial records
5. Search Loiselle's Marriage Index on microfilm
6. Search genealogical dictionaries for early ancestors

CENSUS RECORDS

- Early Census available from the 1660s
- Census districts are election or voting districts, not geographic counties
- Quebec (Lower Canada or Canada East)
 - 1825, 1831, 1842 (head of household only)
 - 1851–1921 (every name census)
- Online at FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com
 - 1851/52, 1901, 1911 at Automated Genealogy <http://automatedgenealogy.com/>

CATHOLIC CHURCH RECORDS

- Quebec was about 90% Catholic
- Church records were kept from 1621
- FamilySearch has filmed the church records to 1900 and are available online
- Ancestry.com has copies of civil records available online as the Drouin Collection

Baptismal Records (Baptême)

Includes name of the child; names of parents, including the mother's maiden name; date and place of birth and baptism; occupation of father; residence; names of witnesses

Marriage Records (Mariage)

Includes names of the bride and groom; names of parents, including the mother's maiden name; date and place of marriage; occupations of couple and parents; residence; witnesses

Burial Records (Sepulture)

Includes name of the deceased; date of burial and/or death; name of spouse, if an adult; names of parents, if a child; occupation of the adult; residence

STRATEGY

1. Find your ancestor in the Drouin index on Ancestry.com
2. View the image on Ancestry
3. Using the source information (date, parish, page, etc.) search the church record images on FamilySearch
4. Look at both records for verification of correct information or discrepancies

DROUIN COLLECTION ON ANCESTRY.COM

Indexes and images of records created by churches and sent to civil authorities as vital records or civil registration from 1621–1900s.

FAMILYSEARCH.ORG RECORDS

Catholic Parish Registers are available to view online from 1621 to 1979. There are name indexes for some parishes in Montreal and Trois-Rivières. Using the Search tab, click on Records, the map of Canada and Quebec. Under the title **Quebec Indexed Historical Records**, click on the link to Show All Collections. Look for the title Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621–1979. Click on Browse Through Images. Scroll through the parish names to find your ancestor's parish. Find the year and page number using the source information found in Ancestry, or view the images page by page.

FAMILYSEARCH.ORG CATALOG

Other records are available through the Catalog. Search the name of the parish and topics such as Church Records, Census Records, Maps, Notarial Records, etc.

Tip: Parish names with Saint, Saints, St., Ste may be listed in the catalog only under the full spelling of Saint or Sainte. Try different searches.

LOISELLE'S MARRIAGE INDEX

Available on microfilm and indexes 70–80% of all Catholic marriages before 1900. It is not complete because Loisel died before he finished. It is very accurate. You can find marriages alphabetically either by the name of the husband or wife. For more information on this index see the FamilySearch Research Wiki at www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Loiselle_Marriage_Index Some of the microfilm index is available online. Use the FamilySearch Catalog to find the images.

GENEALOGICAL DICTIONARIES

Genealogical Dictionary of French Canadian Families (Tanguay Collection), 1606-1890

- Early families of Quebec available on Ancestry.com or in FHL book 971 D2t. The books include several volumes and supplemental volumes

Dictionnaire Généalogique des familles du Québec by René Jetté

- Dictionary of families from early settlement to 1730. FHL book 971.4 D2jr

PROTESTANT CHURCH RECORDS

- Church of England began in 1766
- Presbyterian Churches organized in 1770
- Less information than in Catholic Records
- Quebec Non-Catholic Parish Registers on FamilySearch.org 1763–1967 (images only)
- **A Checklist of Registers of Protestant and Jewish Congregations in Quebec** by R. Neil Broadhurst, FHL book 971.4 K23br

OTHER RECORDS

Immigration Records

Before 1865—No passenger arrival records before 1865. Use **Passenger and Immigration Lists Index** by P. William Filby.

- Available on Ancestry.com or in numerous volumes. FHL book 973 W32p.
- If the ancestor moved to the United States, search U.S. records such as census records, and Canadian Border Crossings, 1895–1954

1865–1935

- Quebec 1865–1900
- Quebec, Montreal and other Canadian ports 1881–1935
 - Ancestry.com 1865–1935
 - FamilySearch.org 1881–1922

Notarial Records

Legal records containing marriage contracts, wills, deeds, transfers of property, guardian and indenture records, and more. Began in 1626.

- Some collections available on Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org

Helpful Internet sites

www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Quebec,_Canada_Genealogy

Resources and links for finding Quebec records and families

www.nosorigines.qc.ca/genealogie.aspx?lng=en

Family trees and origins

www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1471015

Quebec Notarial Records

www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/search/Pages/ancestors-search.aspx

Library and Archives Canada website with database searches



A United States Case Study

Marilyn Markham, AG[®], CGSM, MLS

Many records were used to locate Spencer Seth Markham and his family.

Land Records

- BLM site, <https://glorerecords.blm.gov> for
Utah
South Dakota
Montana
- 1916 general index direct deed, Jefferson County, Montana, film 2367585 Item 3

Vital Records

- Utah State Archives death records, <https://archives.utah.gov>
- Michigan, County Marriages, www.familysearch.org

Cemetery Records

- FindaGrave, www.findagrave.com

Censuses

- 1855 New York state census www.familysearch.org
- 1860 census, New York www.familysearch.org
- 1865 New York state census www.familysearch.org
- 1865 New York agricultural schedule www.familysearch.org
- 1870 census, New York www.familysearch.org
- 1880 Census, New York www.familysearch.org
- 1885 census, Dakota Territory, www.ancestry.com
- 1900 census, Utah www.familysearch.org
- 1910 census, California and Utah www.familysearch.org
- 1920 census, Utah www.familysearch.org
- 1930 census, Utah www.familysearch.org
- 1940 census, Utah www.familysearch.org

City Directories

- City directories, www.ancestry.com
Salt Lake City, Utah
Denver, Colorado

Rochester, New York
Los Angeles, California

Newspapers

- Newspapers

Utah newspapers, Utah Digital Newspapers, <https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu>

Colorado Newspapers, GenealogyBank, www.genealogybank.com

Maps

- History of Monroe County, New York, map, www.familysearch.org, books
- Plat map of Calhoun County Michigan, www.familysearch.org, books

School/College Catalogs

- College catalogs, www.ancestry.com

Voter Registrations

- CA, Voter registrations, 1900-1968, Lemoore Precinct, Kings, CA residence 1900-1918, www.ancestry.com

HELP ON THE INTERNET

- FamilySearch Wiki, <https://familysearch.org/wiki>
- Genealogy Records, Indexes and Databases on the Internet, <http://www.germanroots.com/databases.html>



U.S. Census Techniques and Strategies for Finding Elusive Ancestors

Jason B. Harrison, CGSM

Few records provide as much detail about a person or family as a census. They also supply researchers with important clues that can lead them to other sources. As a result, they are often one of the first record types consulted.

In the past, researchers relied heavily on published indexes, Soundexes, CD-ROM databases, and other finding aids to help them locate people in the census. Fortunately for us, technology has revolutionized the way we do census research. Today, census researchers are blessed to have the convenience of online field searchable indexes and high quality digital images.

Yet, in spite of this, researchers continue to have trouble finding people in the census. This class will discuss several useful techniques and strategies for overcoming the pitfalls and challenges of census research.

WHY CAN'T I FIND THEM IN THE CENSUS?

There are a number of reasons why researchers might not find a person in the census. Consider the following:

- Name variations
- Misspelled names
- Transcription errors
- Informant mistakes
- Falsified information
- Narrow search parameters
- Inadequate indexes
- Incomplete databases
- Illegible records
- Lost or destroyed schedules
- Enumeration omissions

Too often inexperienced researchers are quick to conclude that a person or family was missed by a census enumerator, when in fact, they were not. It is true that some people were missed. However, the number of people overlooked or missed by enumerators is relatively low.

For increased success finding people in the census, always assume that a person was enumerated. If after an exhaustive search a person is not found, try again later. Postponing the search will often give the researcher a chance to gain some additional insights and perspective necessary for solving the problem.

TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES

1. Select a Specific Census to Search

Avoid the temptation to search all of a website's databases at once. Instead, focus efforts on a specific census database such as the 1940 U.S. federal census. This will limit the search results to manageable levels and increase the likelihood of finding your ancestor.

2. Search with Minimal Information

One of the most common mistakes beginners make searching the census is entering too much information. This often eliminates any results from being returned. Start your search with minimal information, such as the person's name and place of residence. If there are too many results, add more information.

3. Search for Exact Matches

Web-sites such as FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com allow users to search for "exact matches only." Use this feature to eliminate unwanted search results.

4. Try a Soundex Search

Soundex is a method of indexing names by their phonetic sound rather than exact spelling. This can be helpful with surnames that vary slightly in spelling, such as "Stewart" and "Stuart." Ancestry.com users can select the Soundex option when performing an Advanced Search. The option is used in conjunction with the "Exact Matches" feature.

5. Don't Rely Solely on the Soundex

Using the Soundex search option, when available, does not guarantee that all variations of a surname will be returned. You may have to try an alternate spelling. Remember:

- Names that sound alike do not always have the same Soundex code. For example, Huff (H100) and Hough (H200).
- Names that sound alike but start with a different first letter will always have a different Soundex. For example, Curl (C640) and Kearl (K640).
- Names with silent letters code differently. For example, Beau (B000) and Beaux (B200).
- Names with prefixes may or may not have been coded with the prefix. For example, Van Cleve may have been coded (V524) or simply (C410) for Cleve.

6. Browse Page by Page

When all else fails, perhaps it's time to consider browsing the census page by page. For small districts or towns, this option is quite feasible. Large cities, on the other hand, would be a monumental undertaking. Although not desirable, this method does work.

7. Search by Surname and Location

Sometimes researchers know where a person was living but still cannot find them. Often a slight deviance in the name is the problem. Search by surname only, restricting the search to a specific state, county, district, or town. Start at the lowest level of jurisdiction, such as the town—and work up to the county or state level.

8. Search by Given Name and Location

Census enumerators or indexers may have misspelled or misread the surname. Try restricting a search to a specific state, county, district, or town, and then search by given

name only.

Common given names are likely to yield far more results, so it may be necessary to add some additional information, such as a date or place of birth, to narrow the results.

9. Search for Initials

Sometimes census enumerators were just plain lazy! Instead of recording a person's given name, they only recorded their initials. For instance, the enumerator of the 1850 census of Socorro, New Mexico Territory, recorded only initials for approximately 70% of the towns' inhabitants. Remember, initials may have been used for first name, middle name, or both.

10. Search for Middle Names

It is not uncommon for a person to go by his or her middle name, rather than his or her first name. For example, a North Carolina family listed all of their children by first name in the 1870 census and then by middle name in 1880. Most people wouldn't even recognize them as the same family!

11. Search Using Nicknames

A person may have been recorded in the census by his or her nickname. Don't be surprised to find Mary listed as Polly, and Elizabeth as Betsy, Bessie, Beth, or Eliza. A good list of traditional nicknames is provided in the FamilySearch Wiki (<http://wiki.familysearch.org>) in the article entitled, "Traditional Nicknames in Old Documents – A Wiki List."

12. Search for Other Family Members

Sometimes it is easier to find another family member in the census than it is to find your direct ancestor. When every name indexes are available, try searching for a person's parents, siblings, spouse or children. This is especially helpful if another family member has a unique name, like Theophalas Jones.

13. Search for Neighbors

If persons or families resided in the same place for an extended period of time, or if religious groups or community clusters migrated to new areas, then try searching for the neighbors. Censuses, land records, and city directories may help with identifying a person's neighbors. Be sure to check several pages before and after an ancestor's entry for all of the neighbors.

14. Use Wildcards

Some search engines allow users to use special symbols called "wildcards" to replace an unknown letter or letters in a word. This allows users to identify multiple variations of a name. Typically, users must provide at least three characters in order to use a "wildcard." The two most common wildcards are an (*) and (?).

An asterisk (*) replaces zero or more characters. So, if a person entered Mar* in the first name field, he or she might get results spelled "Mary," "Maria," "Mariah," "Martha," "Margaret," etc.

A question mark (?) replaces exactly one character. So, if a person entered Sm?th in the last name field, he or she might get results spelled "Smith" and "Smyth." Wildcard searching can be most useful when searching for first name variations.

15. Leave Out the Name Entirely

When all else fails, forego the name and search by other known facts. Using other criteria

such as a person's gender, race, residence, and date and place of birth, can yield positive results.

16. Search Multiple Census Databases

Sometimes it's advantageous to search different online indexes. A name that may have been indexed incorrectly at one online website may be indexed correctly on another. The following websites (includes subscription websites), have online indexes to U.S. federal census records:

- **Ancestry.com** \$
- **FamilySearch.org**
- **findmypast.com** \$
- **Fold3.com** \$
- **HeritageQuestOnline.com** \$
- **MyHeritage.com**

17. Search Published Indexes

Don't forget about the thousands of census indexes produced by volunteers and commercial enterprises. These indexes may be available in print, microfiche, CD-ROM, and on the Internet.

The Family History Library has an outstanding collection of published census indexes. To find them, do a "Places" search in the FHL Catalog, and then look under the topic "Census."

Thomas Kemp's American Census Handbook is another superb resource for identifying pre-1930 census statewide and county indexes.

18. Search for a Street Address

Searching by street address is an effective way to locate individuals whose names were misspelled by enumerators or misread by indexers. Census forms from 1880 to 1940 record street and house numbers for most urban households. Use contemporary city directories to locate a person's street address. Once a street address is obtained, use Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>) and the "One Step" census resources at Steve Morse (www.stevemorse.org) to determine the precise enumeration district (E.D.). Then browse the census E.D., and find the street and house number.

SUMMARY

Everyone at some point will experience difficulty finding a particular person or family in an online census database. When this happens, don't despair. Before conceding defeat, try incorporating the strategies and techniques discussed in this lecture. They work!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dollarhide, William. **The Census Book: A Genealogist's Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules and Indexes**. Bountiful, Utah: Heritage Quest, 1999.

Fryxell, David A. "Master the Census." **Family Tree Magazine** 8 (May 2007): 22-27.

Greenwood, Val D. *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*. 3rd ed. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000.

Kemp, Thomas Jay. **The American Census Handbook**. Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2001.

Szucs, Loretto Dennis, and Matthew Wright. "Census Records." **The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy**. Ed. Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking. 3rd ed. Provo, Utah: Ancestry, 2006. 157-220.



Great Internet Sites for United States Family History

Marilyn Markham, AG[®], CGSM, MLS

- FamilySearch (free) www.familysearch.org
 - o Family Tree
 - o Historical Records
 - o Catalog
 - o Books
 - o Wiki – has more Internet sites
- BYU Family History Library (free)
 - o Records <https://sites.lib.byu.edu/familyhistory/records>
 - o Video Training <https://sites.lib.byu.edu/familyhistory/classes-and-webinars/youtube-videos>
 - o Webinars <https://sites.lib.byu.edu/familyhistory/classes-and-webinars/online-webinars>
- Ancestry (\$) www.ancestry.com
 - o Card Catalog
 - o Family Trees
 - o Research Aids
- National Archives (free) <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html>
 - Resources for Genealogists
- HeritageQuest (\$) www.heritagequestonline.com
- American Ancestors, New England Historical Genealogical Society (\$) www.americanancestors.org/index.aspx
- findmypast (\$) www.findmypast.com
 - o Periodical Source Index (PerSI)
 - o Mocavo
- ProQuest (\$) www.proquest.com
 - o MyHeritage (\$) www.myheritage.com
- One Great Family (\$) <https://OneGreatFamily.com>
- Olive Tree Genealogy (free) www.olivetreegenealogy.com

- Find a Grave (free) www.findagrave.com
- BillionGraves (mostly free) <https://billiongraves.com>
- Interment.net (free) www.interment.net
- German Roots (free, though has some links to \$) www.germanroots.com
 - o Online Birth and Marriage Records Indexes (free) www.germanroots.com/vitalrecords.html
 - o Online Searchable Death Indexes (free) www.germanroots.com/deathrecords.html
 - o Death Indexes (free) <http://www.deathindexes.com>
 - o Ship Passenger Lists and Records Online (free) www.germanroots.com/onlinelists.html
 - o Online Searchable Naturalization Records and Indexes (free) www.germanroots.com/naturalization.html
 - o Online Searchable Military Records & Databases – USA (free) www.germanroots.com/military.html
- Ellis Island, 1892+ (free) www.libertyellisfoundation.org/passenger
- Castle Garden, 1820-1892 (free) www.castlegarden.org
- Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild, ISTG (free) www.immigrantships.net
- The Ships List (free) www.theshipslist.com
- Mormon Migration (free) <https://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu>
- Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel (free) <https://history.lds.org/overlandtravel>
- Fold3 (\$) www.fold3.com
- Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Database (free) www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm
- Daughters of the American Revolution Genealogy Research (part free) http://services.dar.org/public/dar_research/search
- Bureau of Land Management (free) www.glorerecords.blm.gov

- United States Board on Geographic Names (free) <https://geonames.usgs.gov>
- Chronicling America, Library of Congress, newspapers (free) <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
- GenealogyBank (\$) www.genealogybank.com
- Newspaper Archive (\$) <https://newspaperarchive.com>
- Newspapers.com (\$) www.newspapers.com
- Utah Digital Newspapers <https://digitalnewspapers.org> (free)
- The Ancestor Hunt (free) www.theancestorhunt.com
- Elephind <https://elephind.com> (free)
- US Timelines – Creation and Use with Families (free) FS Wiki, www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Timeline
- Ancestor Hunt (free) genealogy search engines www.ancestorhunt.com
- Linkpendium (free) www.linkpendium.com
- Cyndi's List www.cyndislist.com (free)
- RootsWeb <http://home.rootsweb.ancestry.com> (free)
- USGenWeb <http://usgenweb.org> (free)
- Stephen Morse <http://stevemorse.org> (free)
- Italian Genealogical Group www.italianguen.org/records-search (free)
- Google Books <https://books.google.com> (free)
- Internet Archive <https://archive.org> (free)
- WorldCat www.worldcat.org (free)
- Family History Books <https://books.familysearch.org> (free)
- PublicLibraries.com www.publiclibraries.com (free)
- Search Engines

- Google – www.google.com
- Dogpile – www.dogpile.com
- Yippy – <https://yippy.com>
- Mocavo now on Findmypast

Subscription sites may be free at family history centers, the Family History Library, public libraries, or college libraries.



FamilySearch, Family Tree Memories

Lyn Rasmussen, Research Specialist

Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander, of the Seventy, taught that ***“The work of gathering and sharing eternal family keepsakes is a personal responsibility. It cannot be passed off or given to another. A life that is not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely be lost to memory. What a tragedy this can be in the history of a family. Knowledge of our ancestors shapes us and instills within us values that give direction and meaning to our lives (‘Bridges and Eternal Keepsakes,’ Dennis B. Neuenschwander, General Conference April 1999).***

FamilySearch is a powerful tool for family history research. In addition to adding and exploring genealogical information in FamilySearch, you can attach photos, documents, stories, and audio to an ancestor. Doing so helps us get a better picture of how they lived, why they made the choices they made, and how we fit into the overall picture of our family. It can “turn our hearts” to those who have gone before us. (**Malachi 4:6**).

The Memories Tool

From the FamilySearch home page, click on Memories in the tool bar to bring up a menu with four options:

- Overview
- Gallery
- People
- Find

Overview

This selection will take you to a page that presents an overview of the Memories tool. This is a great place to acquaint yourself with Memories features.

Gallery

The Memories Gallery is a place where all the photos, stories, documents, and audio recordings you add to FamilySearch are collected. Here you will see all the memories you have added to Family Tree Memories.

People

The People selection is a page where all persons in your tree with Memories uploaded are collected. Click on a person to go to their individual Memories page where you can see all the Memories added by you and by others to that person. The list can be sorted in a number of different ways. From People you can view your relationship to an ancestor.

Find

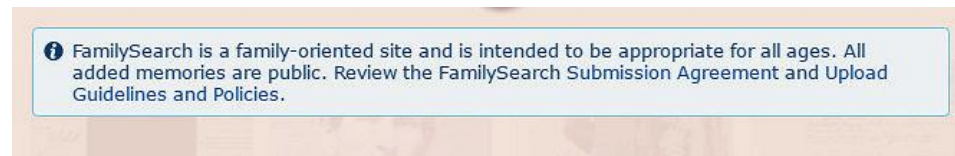
The Find selection lets you search all of Family Tree Memories by name or by the title of the memory.

Types of Media stored in Family Tree Memories

- Photos
- Documents
- Stories
- Audio

FamilySearch Content Submission Agreement

- Users are required to agree to the FamilySearch Content Submission Agreement prior to adding photos or other documents in Family Tree.
- This agreement and the Submission Guidelines will appear when you first enter a memory and will also appear when you click on the add button to add a memory to the Gallery.



Submission agreement and Upload guidelines

General Memories Concept Discussion

- Memories can be edited, re-tagged, linked, and unlinked by the user who added the memory – others can view the memory but cannot edit or delete it.
- However, anyone can detach the memory.
- Memories attached to living individuals in Family Tree can only be seen by the person who entered the information, except for photos and documents which can be found by Google; therefore, it is not recommended that you add photos or documents of living people to Family Tree due to privacy concerns.

Prior to uploading a photo or document, check the format and size of the photo or document in your file folder.

- Photos must be .bmp, .jpg, .png or .tif format. Must be less than 15 MB.
- Documents must be .bmp, .jpg, .png, .tif, or .pdf format. Must be less than 15 MB.

There are two ways to add Memories to Family Tree. Memories can be added through the Person Details page or directly into the Memories Gallery.

Adding Photos to Family Tree Memories

Directions to “Upload” Photos through the Person Details Page

1. Sign in at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org).
2. Click an individual, and click Person to open the person detail page.
3. Click the Memories tab.
4. In the Photos or Documents section, click either Upload [Photo or Document) and select the file from your computer, or click Select from Gallery to add an item you have already uploaded. The drag and drop feature is not available to upload memory items on the person detail page.

The image will automatically begin to upload directly into the Memories page of that person. It is also added to the Gallery. Another option to upload the photo is to drag and drop the photo into the small rectangular area next to the words "Upload Photo."

Directions to "Upload" Photos through the Gallery

1. Sign in to [FamilySearch.org](https://familysearch.org).
2. Click Memories.
3. Click Gallery.
4. Click the Photos icon or Documents icon. The process below applies to photos and documents. The instructions mention only photos.

Note: Although you can click Memories on the person page and upload a photo or document, you still need to go to Memories or Photos to find the photo or document. If you start with Memories from a person page, you add steps to the upload process.

5. Under the "Drag and drop files to upload or..." heading, click the box if you want to use your file names as the titles in Memories.
6. To add memories and open the upload box, click the + in the green circle.
7. To upload a photo or document to Memories, click Choose Files. Go to a folder on your computer, and find the photo or document you want to add.
8. To upload and add one photo or document, place your cursor on the photo or document, and then click, drag, and drop it to the image on the right, which will open when you click Add Memories.
9. To upload and add multiple photos or documents, use the instructions below:
 - To select a consecutive range of photos, find and click the first photo, press Shift, and scroll down to click the last photo to select a consecutive range of photos. Then drag the group of photos to the image, and release the mouse button.
 - To select specific photos from a folder, find and click the first photo, press Ctrl, scroll through your list, and click each photo you want to upload. Then drag the group of photos to the image, and release the mouse button.
 - Note: We recommend that you not add more than 20 photos at a time, since you need to tag each photo separately.
10. After you drop the file or files, each file shows as a gray image. It will initially have a "SCREENING" band overlay. Each photo is screened by FamilySearch for appropriate content. When screening is finished a "Completed" box appears.
11. Once the upload is complete, you can now click each photo and add a title and tags to the photos and documents.



Attaching the Photo in the Gallery to a Person in Family Tree

1. To attach the photo to a person, select the photo from the Gallery.
2. Hover over the desired photo and click on the small checkmark in the upper right corner. You can select multiple photos at attach.
3. When the checkmark turns blue, click "Attach" in the bottom left corner.

Working with Uploaded Photos

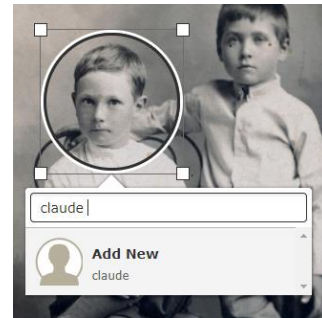
Photos uploaded to Family Tree Memories can be titled, tagged to persons in the Tree, shared, edited, and deleted. These tasks can be completed in the Photo Viewer window. To get to the Photo Viewer page just click on the photo to bring it up in a full screen view.

Title and Tag the photo

- Photos uploaded to the Tree through the Person Details page are automatically tagged and identified with the name of the person whose page you are on.
- Photos uploaded to the Tree through the Gallery page need to have the title and tags manually added.

Directions to Title and Tag a Photo.

1. Editing the title: to edit the title click on edit title. If no title has been added the edit box will say “add title.” It is also possible to add a title to a photo from the Gallery page.
2. Adjusting the tag shape: the initial tag, seen when you hover over the photo, is a large oval. This tag can be resized and reshaped by adjusting any of the white corner squares.
3. Naming the tag: Enter the person’s name into the identification box. Tagging multiple people in a photo: To tag multiple people in a photo, you must save the first tag-- Click Save. Then click on the photo where you wish to locate the next tag. Resize the tag. In the name box type the person’s name exactly as it appears in Family Tree. Family Tree will locate the person.
4. If the person’s name is not in Family Tree, click on “Add New Person.” Family Tree will search for the person. If the person’s name pops up, click on it, if not, add the person to Family Tree.
5. Editing a tag: To edit a tag click on the name of the person in “People In This Photo” column on the right. Click on EDIT TAG.
6. Removing a tag: To remove a tag click on the name of the person in “People In This Photo” column on the right. Click on REMOVE TAG.



Adding Documents to Family Tree Memories

The process for adding documents to Family Tree Memories is the same as for adding photos. Documents can be uploaded through the Person Details page or through the Gallery.

- Title the document: be sure to include the Who, What, When and Where of the document in the title, not just the name.
- Tag the document: the tag shape is different than the tag shape for photos. It is a rectangle or square.

Entering Documents as Sources

Documents are often sources of vital information. If you have already uploaded a birth, marriage, death or other record containing vital information into the Gallery it should also be entered as a source in the “Sources” section of the Person Details page. The FamilySearch handout “Attaching Documents as Sources in Family Tree” gives a step-by-step process how to do this. This handout is found under Family History Library Webinars “Attaching Sources to Family Tree.”

Additional Help

To learn more about working with photos and documents, go FamilySearch “Get Help” in the upper right of any Family Tree page.

Adding a Story to Family Tree Memories

Stories of your ancestors can be shared on Family Tree. Using the “Stories” feature you can directly type a story into the Person Details page of you ancestor

- The stories template allows you to only enter text.
- You cannot add a PDF file as a story—you can add it as a document.
- Any text that complies with the guidelines supplied in the [Submission Agreement](#) and that can help with research or help others understand the life of a family or individual is appropriate.

Note: You have a time limit of 1 hour to enter and post a story. If you need more time, click Save, and then click Edit Story to continue.

Directions to add a Story through the Person Details page

1. From the Person Details page of the ancestor you would like to add a story to click on “Memories.”
2. Next, select “Stories” or scroll down the page to the Stories section.
3. Click Create Story.
4. Follow the directs above beginning at 4.

If you prefer, you can enter your story in a text editor such as Notepad, Microsoft Word, or Open Office and then copy and paste the text into the story template as above. You can only paste text and cannot choose different fonts or type sizes. The system ignores bold, italics, or other formatting.

Note: Stories cannot be uploaded by dragging and dropping. (Photos, however, can be uploaded by dragging and dropping.)

Directions to add a Story through the Gallery page

1. At the top of the FamilySearch.org page, hover your mouse over Memories, and click Gallery.
2. In the top center of the gallery page, click + in a green circle.
3. Click Create a Story.
4. Enter a title in the title field.
5. Enter the text into the resizable text box. If you need a bigger box, left-click, hold, and drag the lower right corner of the text box to the desired size.
6. If you want to add a photo, to the left of the story box, click Upload Photo to find a photo on your computer to add. Or click Select from Gallery to add a photo already in the gallery. From the gallery, you can use the Arrange box in the top right portion of the screen to sort the photos to more easily find the one you want. Mouse over the photo, and a small circle appears in the upper right corner of the photo. Click the circle, and the photo turns blue to show you have selected it. Scroll to the bottom of the page of photos. Below the left panel, click Attach to attach the photo to your story and return to the story.
7. Click Save.

Adding Audio to Family Tree Memories

Overview

- Audio is a subset of Memories in FamilySearch.org. You can upload audio files to the FamilySearch site, add tags to them, and attach the tag to an individual in Family Tree for others to discover and enjoy.
- Audio files can also be uploaded by apps on mobile devices. Title, Description, Upload, Tag, Attach, Details, Albums, Report Abuse, etc., all work the same for Audio files as they do for other Memory types (Photos, Stories, and Documents).

Mobile Devices

- Mobile devices, by design, require 2 clicks to play an audio file. This is to ensure the user intends to download and play the audio file, since a person roaming with a mobile device might incur data fees.
- All Apple iOS devices will NOT display a volume control or mute button on the browser interface, since Apple has specified that all volume control on their devices must be done using hardware volume control and mute buttons on the device.
- There has been no testing on Mobile Windows Surface devices, so support on these devices is not guaranteed.
- Caution: Deleting the audio from the mobile app also removes it from Memories on FamilySearch.org.

Details of Audio Support

- The supported Audio file types are .m4a, .mp3, and .wav. The maximum audio file size is 15 MB.
- You upload audio files through the Memories Audio tab, just as other Memories are uploaded to FamilySearch.
- If you have an audio file in a format other than one of the supported file types, do a web search for an audio file converter. There are many free versions and several online versions from which to select.

Directions to Add Audio Files through the Person Details Page

1. Sign in to your account at <https://familysearch.org/>.
2. Select an individual, and to open the person page, click Person.
3. Click Memories.
4. Click Audio. You can add audio files by clicking Upload Audio and selecting the file from your computer, or click Select from Gallery.

Directions to Add Audio Files Through the Gallery

1. Sign in to your account at <https://familysearch.org/>.
2. Click Memories and Gallery.
3. Click the green + sign in the upper middle portion of the screen to use the option to Drag and drop files to upload, or click Choose Files to select a file.

Notes:

- We support .jpg, .tif, .bmp, .png, .pdf, .mp3, .m4a, and .wav file types up to 15MB. Only .mp3, .m4a, and .wav are supported audio file types.
- All added memories are public.
- To review terms and conditions, click Submission Agreement.
- For information regarding the upload process, click Upload Guidelines.

When you drag and drop a file:

- FamilySearch displays a pop-up screen the first time you upload a memory item containing the FamilySearch Content Submission Agreement.
- Please read and check the box stating “I have read and agree to the FamilySearch Content Submission Agreement and Upload Guidelines.”
- Click Continue.

When you right-click the title or description on the upload file, the details screen opens, and you can do the following:

- Add or edit a title.
- Add or edit a description.
- Tag the memory item, and attach it to a person in Family Tree.
- Add or review comments.
- Share the memory item using the available social media options.
- Report abuse, if appropriate.
- Note: You also can access the standard memory features of People, Albums, Details, Event, and Delete.

If there is an unsupported browser and audio file combination or the file size is exceeded, a message in red appears to alert you.



The Research Process

Tim Bingaman, AG®, Research Specialist
bingamantd@familysearch.org

Why a class on the research process? Isn't everything on the Internet? Well, no! As a professional researcher, I feel that the family researcher is relying too much on the World Wide Web

Introduction

- Identify What You Know
- Decide What You Want to Learn
- Select Records to Search
- Obtain and Search the Record
- Evaluate and Use the Information

IDENTIFY WHAT YOU KNOW

Start by reviewing what information you already know. Record that information on appropriate forms or computer family history programs. Keep your records organized.

- Computer Programs for Generating Forms
You could also use computer programs to generate these forms. After you type genealogical information once, these programs can generate many kinds of forms such as completed family group records and pedigrees. You can make frequent updates and share information with others while limiting the mistakes caused by redundant typing or writing of information.
- Pedigree Chart
- Family Group Record
- Prepare a Research Log

DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO LEARN

- Identify candidate families for further research
- One family at a time
- One research objective at a time

SELECT RECORDS TO SEARCH

Selecting a record to search is the most complex part of the research process. You will need to—

- Identify a category of sources.
- Choose a record type.
- Select specific records.
- Describe the record on a research log.

OBTAIN AND SEARCH THE RECORDS

If you have effectively completed earlier steps, you are now ready for the most exciting and rewarding step of finding and searching the records.

- Obtain the Records
 - Internet Resources
 - Family History Library
 - Family History Centers
 - Other Research Libraries
 - Local Libraries
 - Interlibrary Loan
 - Original Record Holder
 - Courthouses and Government Offices
 - Archives
 - Societies
 - Publishers and Booksellers
 - Periodicals
 - E-mail and Correspondence
- View the Records
 - Read and Interpret the Records
 - Formats of Records
- Search the Records
 - Look for Indexes
 - Search for the Whole Family
 - Surname Searches
 - Establish Search Ranges
 - Be Thorough
 - Know Limitations
 - Multiple Families
- Record the Results
 - If the Search Result Is Negative
 - If the Search Result Is Positive

EVALUATE AND USE THE INFORMATION

After you have searched records you are ready to use the information you found.

- Evaluate what you found
- Transfer needed information to the appropriate forms
- Cite your sources
- Organize the new records
- Share your findings

When you have learned all you wish to learn about a family, share your information with others by contributing it to Internet databases like FamilySearch, or by preparing and publishing a book, or article, or putting up an Internet site. You will also be ready to start the process again and return to Step 1 to research another objective or individual.



Genetic Genealogy: An Introduction to DNA

Beth Taylor, CGsm

Have you heard your friends and fellow genealogists enthuse about DNA but don't know what it's all about? Wondering if a DNA test is right for you? Come learn about DNA, why it's valuable, which tests you can take, and how it might help you in your genealogy research.

What is DNA?

DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is the genetic code that defines each individual's biological characteristics. DNA is made up of strings of individual bases or nucleotides which are paired with their counterparts. These strings of DNA are coiled into packages or chromosomes. Chromosomes are found in the nucleus (or center) of most of cells. Each nucleus contains 23 paired chromosomes (46 total chromosomes). One of these paired chromosomes (the sex chromosomes, usually identified as X and Y) defines whether you are biologically male or biologically female. The other 22 paired chromosomes are known as autosomes.

Many cells also have mitochondria, which act as the powerhouse of the cell. These mitochondria are located outside the cell's nucleus but have their own DNA.

Why is DNA Valuable?

DNA is valuable because it is inherited. Your DNA is a composite of your parents' DNA, your grandparents' DNA, and your great-grandparents' DNA. Half of your DNA comes from your father and half from your mother. Because DNA is inherited, it is useful for genealogy when it is compared with the DNA of other people. When you share segments of DNA with other people, it is assumed that you both descend from the same ancestor. By searching your family trees (created through traditional research), you can locate that common ancestor and verify the relationship.

Types of DNA

yDNA

The Y chromosome (one of the two paired sex chromosomes) is only carried by men and is passed from father to son. By comparing the Y chromosome of two males, you can determine whether they share a common patrilineal ancestor.

mtDNA

MtDNA, or mitochondrial DNA, is found in a cell's mitochondria. Mitochondria are passed from a woman to all her children, regardless of whether they are male or female. By comparing the mitochondrial DNA of two individuals, you can determine whether they share a common matrilineal ancestor.

atDNA

Autosomal DNA includes all the chromosomes (excluding the sex chromosomes). Autosomal DNA can help identify ancestors within the last 5-7 generations. However, because you only

inherit half of each of your parents' DNA, some of your ancestors "fall off" your genetic tree (meaning you did not inherit any of their DNA). You are also guaranteed to only share DNA with 2nd cousins or closer.

DNA and Genealogy

Ethnicity

Most DNA companies provide a guess as to your ethnic origin. This ethnic origin is based on the comparison of your DNA to reference samples collected by each DNA company from around the world. Ethnicity may help focus your research, however, the results should not be taken as fact.

Projects

Many genealogists who test their Y and mitochondrial DNA join projects. Projects may be grouped by geographic regions, surnames, or haplogroups. Projects are run by knowledgeable administrators who group the DNA of project members based on unique markers. After joining a project, check to see how your DNA compares to the DNA of others in the project.

Chromosome Mapping

Chromosome mapping is the process of mapping DNA segments to specific ancestors. Once you know how you are related to a match, you can assume that the DNA segments you share were inherited from your common ancestor and you can assign those segments to that ancestor using a visual representation of your chromosomes.

Adoptions

Adoptees and others with unknown parentage are using DNA to find and connect with their biological parents. Adoptees test with all three DNA companies. Starting with their close matches, they explore trees and identify common ancestors that appear in more than one ancestry. They then search for those ancestors' descendants to find potential biological relatives. Learn more at adoptiondna.blogspot.com.

Brick Walls

Genealogists can break through brick walls using DNA. To solve a brick wall, start by using traditional research to hypothesize a potential relationship. Then, locate multiple living descendants of your ancestor and living descendants of the family you think you are related to and test their DNA. If a high enough percentage of the descendants share the predicted amount of DNA, you can come to a conclusion regarding that relationship.

DNA Companies

AncestryDNA – AncestryDNA tests autosomal DNA. Your DNA is collected by spitting into a tube. Results are tied to your Ancestry.com account and family tree(s). AncestryDNA provides ethnicity results, match lists and groups users into Genetic Communities and DNA Circles. (dna.ancestry.com)

MyHeritage – MyHeritage DNA tests autosomal DNA. Your DNA is collected by scraping your cheek. MyHeritage provides ethnicity results and match lists. (www.myheritage.com/dna)

FamilyTreeDNA – FamilyTreeDNA provides kits for testing yDNA, mtDNA, and atDNA (called Family Finder). Your DNA is collected by scraping your cheek. FamilyTreeDNA provides

match tools and a chromosome browser. (www.familytreedna.com)

23andMe – 23andMe is focused on DNA and health data. 23andMe tests autosomal DNA. DNA is collected by spitting into a tube. 23andMe also has ethnicity tools and match comparisons. (www.23andme.com)

3rd Party Tools

GedMatch – GedMatch lets you upload and compare your raw DNA data regardless of which company you tested with. GedMatch also provides additional admixture tools, one-to-many comparison, one-to-one comparisons, and more. Requires registration and contribution of a raw DNA file. (<https://gedmatch.com>)

DNA Gedcom – Use the Autosomal DNA Segment Analyzer to group matches by segment using your 23andMe or FamilyTreeDNA data. DNA Gedcom also includes GWorks, a tool which compares GedCom files. Requires registration. (<https://www.dnagedcom.com>)

DNA.land – DNA.land provides additional ethnicity tools and connects you with additional matches. Requires registration and contribution of a raw DNA file. (<https://dna.land>)

ISOGG Wiki – The International Society of Genetic Genealogists has created and maintains a wiki (community written encyclopedia) on DNA and how it used for genealogy. (isogg.org/wiki/Wiki)

Genetic Genealogy Standards – The genetic genealogy community has established a set of standards for genealogists using DNA as part of your research. (www.geneticgenealogystandards.com)

DNA Vocabulary

Admixture: see Ethnic Origins

Autosomes: numbered (non-sex) chromosomes

atDNA (autosomal DNA): The 22 numbered chromosomes (also called autosomes); shared segments longer than 7-10 centiMorgans indicate a probable common ancestor

Base Pair: Two complementary bases located on opposing DNA strands; see nucleotide

cMs (centiMorgans): a unit of measurement for DNA segments

Chromosome: A package for carrying DNA in the nucleus of cells

Chromosome Browser: a feature offered by some genealogy companies that allow you view matching segments on a visual map of the chromosomes

Chromosome Mapping: The process of assigning ancestors to individual DNA segments

DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid): The genetic code that defines each individual's biological characteristics

DNA Circle: A feature of AncestryDNA that connects users who have a common ancestor and who share DNA

DNA Project: A group of people whose DNA or surname indicates a biological connection; project administrators for DNA projects are knowledgeable and group the DNA results of group members

Endogamy: When a population becomes genetically isolated over multiple generations making it difficult to use DNA to identify true relationships; examples include island populations and

Ashkenazi Jews

Ethnic Origins: The percentage of your DNA inherited from specific ethnicities based on a comparison between your DNA and reference samples; different companies report ethnic origins differently

Family Finder: atDNA test offered by FamilyTreeDNA

Genetic Communities: a feature on AncestryDNA which groups Ancestry members into common ancestral geographic regions based on similarities in DNA

Genetic Distance: on FTDNA, the number of mutations that differentiate two individuals in yDNA and mtDNA results; on GEDMatch, the suggested number of generations between two individuals and their common ancestor based on their matching segments

Genetic Genealogy: The use of DNA to identify family members, both living and deceased

Genetic Genealogy Standards: Ethical and usage standards for genealogists using DNA

Haplogroup: Group of similar haplotypes that share a common ancestor based on a single mutation

Haplogroup Project: A project consisting of those who share a common haplogroup

Haplotype: A group of alleles that are inherited together, also known as a genetic signature

IBD (inherited by design): Segments of DNA that are longer than 10 centiMorgans are considered to be inherited by design, indicating a common ancestor

IBS (inherited by state): Segments of DNA that are shorter than 7 centiMorgans are considered to be inherited by state, indicating no common ancestor

ISOGG Wiki: A wiki built and maintained by the International Society of Genetic Genealogists

Match: Individual identified by a DNA company as having shared segments of DNA

Mitochondria: Located in the cytoplasm of a cell, the mitochondria are the cell's powerhouses

MRCA (most recent common ancestor): The most recent ancestor or ancestral couple that is shared by two individuals who have matching segments of DNA

mtDNA (mitochondrial DNA): DNA associated with a cell's mitochondria; passed down from mother to child

Mutation: A change in the DNA

NAD (new ancestor discoveries): A beta project of AncestryDNA designed to help users identify ancestors based on their DNA

NPE (non-paternal event): when the father identified through paper trail research is not the biological father; in yDNA when there is a break between the surname of the son and the surname of the biological father

Nuclear DNA: DNA located in the cell's nucleus; made up of 23 paired chromosomes

Nucleotide: the basic structure of DNA; there are four known nucleotides

Paper Trail: Genealogy done by researching traditional records such as census, probate, vital, etc.

Phasing: the process of assigning DNA to each parent

Surname Project: A project consisting of DNA samples from all individuals with the same surname

Triangulation: the process of triangulating a DNA match with paper trail records, leading to the

most recent common ancestor

xDNA: one of two sex chromosomes; individuals with two X chromosomes are female; x chromosomes have a unique inheritance pattern because an X chromosome cannot be passed from father to son.

yDNA: one of two sex chromosomes; individuals with a Y chromosome are male; yDNA is passed from father to son



Using LDS Church Records

Marilyn Markham, AG[®], CGSM, MLS

Introduction

This class will review sources for LDS Research available at the Family History Library as well as sources available online. You can also use the Wiki page titled **Tracing LDS Ancestors** to find LDS sources available in the library and online. There are additional resources at the Church History Library, both online and on site.

Strategy

1. Start with the information and records your family already has.
2. Use compiled sources to find clues and the sources for original records.
3. Use original records.

Archives and Libraries

FamilySearch Library, 35 N. West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150, www.familysearch.org and www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library

Church History Library, 15 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150, <https://history.lds.org/section/library>

Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 300 North Main, Salt Lake City, UT, www.dupinternational.org

BYU Harold B. Lee Library, Provo, UT, <https://lib.byu.edu>

U of U Marriott Library, Salt Lake City, UT, www.lib.utah.edu/collections/index.php

For more libraries and archives, see FamilySearch.org Wiki, LDS Archives and Libraries.

Finding Records using FamilySearch.org

To find records using a film, fiche, or book number given below

- Go to FamilySearch.org
- Click the Search menu.
- Click Catalog.
- Click Film/Fiche Number (or Call Number for a book).
- Type the film number.
- Click the Search button.
- Click the blue title.

Compiled Sources

- **FamilySearch Family Tree**, [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)
- **Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1848**, by Susan E. Black
 - 50 volumes, FHL book 289.3 Ea85m, organized alphabetically
 - Microfiche version, 95 fiche, FHL fiche 6031596
 - Available online at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) Click the Search menu, then click Catalog. Choose Title search, and type at least a few words of the title.
- **Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah**, FHL book 979.2 D3e, also digitized at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) Use the Catalog as above.
- **Early Church Information File (ECIF)**, digitized at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) Click the Search menu, then click Records. In the lower right under Find a Collection, type early church, then click Utah, FamilySearch, Early Church Information File, 1830-1900.
- **Encyclopedic History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**, FHL book 289.309 J453e, contains history of LDS wards. Index and book online at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) Use Catalog as above.
- **Genealogical surveys of LDS members: autobiographies and ancestors**, 34 vols. FHL book 289.3 G286g, or film starting with 1059454 which are online. Indexed in the ECIF.
- Ancestral File and Pedigree Resource File, search Genealogies at [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)
- Early Latter-day Saints, www.earlylds.com
- Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1848, [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)
- Mormons and Their Neighbors, <https://lib.byu.edu/collections/mormons-and-their-neighbors>
- Winter Quarters project, <http://winterquarters.byu.edu/>
- Brigham Young Office Files, 1832-1878, https://eadview.lds.org/findingaid/CR%201234%201/?pds_handle=
- Early Mormon Missionaries, <https://history.lds.org/missionary/?lang=eng>
- **Index to The Journal History of the Church**, 58 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 1233503
- **The Journal History of the Church**, 248 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 1259729, <https://tinyurl.com/ybkx8vva> i.e. Historical Department journal history of the Church, 1896-2001
- **Pioneer Women of Faith and Fortitude**, FHL book 979.D36p, vols. 1-4

Immigration, emigration or migration

- **Mormon Migration**, <http://mormonmigration.lib.byu.edu>
- **Overland Travel Database**, <https://history.lds.org/overlandtravels>
- **New York Passenger Lists**, www.libertyellisfoundation.org
- Ellis Island, 1892-1924, www.castlegarden.org
- Pioneer Ancestors Search, www.familysearch.org/campaign/pioneers#
- Mormon Pioneer Search, https://user.xmission.com/~nelsonb/pioneer_search3.htm
- 1839-1913 - *Historian's Office Record of Members, 1839-1913* (known as Minnie Margetts file), 16 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 415444, online in alphabetical order
- 1849-1925 - **European Emigration Card Index**, 9 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 298431, online in alphabetical order
- **Emigration records, European Mission; 1849-1885, 1899-1923**, 5 films beginning with FHL film 25690, online in alphabetical order
- 1847-1868 - **Utah Immigration Card Index, 1847-1868**, 3 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 298440
- **1849-1885, 1899-1923 - Emigration Records, European Mission**; 6 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 25690, online in alphabetical order
- **Scandinavian LDS Mission Index**, 344 fiche, beginning FHL fiche 6060482, not yet online

LDS Census Records, Ward, or Branch Records

- 1852-1853, Registry of names of persons residing in the various wards as to bishop's reports, www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/176669?availability=Family%20History%20Library
- 1856 Utah state census returns, FHL film 505913, not yet online
- 1872 Kane, Rich, Tooele and Utah counties list names. At the Church History Library. The call number is MS#2920 - folders 9-19. An index is available.
- 1914-1960 Six censuses of members of the LDS Church in Utah and elsewhere. On 651 films, starting with film 25708, some films online, some not yet www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/126146?availability=Family%20History%20Library

For more information, see FamilySearch.org Wiki, LDS Census.

LDS Ward, Branch, or Stake Records

- **Deceased Membership Records, 1942-1988**, listed in alphabetical order, beginning FHL film 884001, not yet online
- To find ward, branch, stake, and other LDS Church records, go to FamilySearch.org
 - Click the Search menu.
 - Click Catalog.
 - Do a Place search for the city where the ward, branch, or stake was located.
 - Click Church Records.

Newspapers

- **Utah Digital Newspapers**, <http://digitalnewspapers.org>, browse county to see newspapers for each county.
- **Chronicling America**, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>
- **Salt Lake Tribune** issues from 1872-1977, found at newspaperarchive.com (\$)

Other Records

- **Obituary Card Index to the Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News as of 31 December 1970**, 64 rolls of film, beginning FHL film 821636, not yet online
- Utah State **Cemeteries and Burials**, <http://cemeteries.utah.gov/burials/execute/searchburials>
- **Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1956**, <https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1747615>
- **United States Mexican War Index and Service Records, 1846-1848**, www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1987567
- Mormon Battalion Muster Rolls, [www.mormonbattalion.com/Original Battalion Roster](http://www.mormonbattalion.com/Original_Battalion_Roster)
- **Utah, Territorial Case Files of the U.S. District Courts, 1870-1896**, www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1854318



Mine the Gold! Effectively Research Millions of New Freedmen's Bureau Records from FamilySearch

Thom Reed
thom@familysearch.org

You will learn:

- What was the Freedmen's Bureau?
- What records were kept during the operation of the bureau?
- What was the Freedmen's Bureau Project?
- How can we use the Freedmen's Bureau records for genealogical research?

What was the Freedmen's Bureau?

Formed by an act of Congress at the end of the Civil War in 1865, the Freedmen's Bureau (The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands) provided support for newly freed African Americans and poor white Southerners. With all of this support came the first records for a new group of U.S. citizens.

What records were kept during the operation of the bureau?

- 1.5 million digital images
- Labor Contracts
- Ration Records
- Education Records
- Claim Records
- Records of Complaints
- Hospital and Medical Records
- Land and Property Records
- Court Records
- Marriage Records
- Records of Persons Hired
- Assistant Commissioner Records

How can we use the Freedmen's Bureau records for genealogical research?

How to find indexed Freedmen's Bureau collections on FamilySearch.org

1. Go to [FamilySearch.org](https://familysearch.org) and click on "Search Records"
2. Click "Browse all published collections"
3. Type "freed" in the "Filter by collection name" box
4. Click on "Records" to sort the result

- FamilySearch.org Collections with a number in the Records column have been indexed
- Collections with "Browse Images" in the Records column have not been indexed

In This Presentation You learned:

- What was the Freedmen's Bureau?
- What records were kept during the operation of the bureau?
- What was the Freedmen's Bureau Project?
- How can we use the Freedmen's Bureau records for genealogical research?



Immigration and Canadian Border Crossings

Carol Smith, Research Specialist, AG®
FamilySearch
smithce@familySearch.org

Understanding Immigration

Immigration records provide sources that give information about the movement of groups or individuals from one place to another, usually between nations.

- Immigration—to enter a country
- Emigration—to leave a country

Why search for immigration records?

There are a variety of immigration records that can help to identify the town of origin of the immigrant so research can be continued in the home country. A search for a variety of different immigration records may produce an immigration date and even family members.

Where do I begin?

Always begin with home sources. Interview living relatives and search for any clues or documents that might be available in the family.

- Family traditions, recipes, and papers may give you clues to a country or locality to search for your ancestor.
- Bible records often have birth, marriage, or death information recorded in their pages.
- Church records including baptism, confirmation, or marriage certificates may be found in family records.
- Obituaries from newspapers may also be found in home sources.
- Pictures of ancestors might provide clues through their dress or locality.
- Other papers, including certificates or organization records.

After checking for any available home sources, search the following records for immigration information:

- Census
- Passenger lists, arrival and departure
- Passports
- Naturalization and citizenship
- Land entry case files
- Emigration and immigration

Census Records

Find your ancestor in every available United States census. Also search each state of residence for State census records. Immigration information in the United States census records include the following information:

- 1820 - 1840—number of individuals in household who were “foreigners” (not naturalized)
- 1850 census gives the place of birth
- 1870 census gives male citizens 21 years of age (naturalized)
- 1880 - 1940 census gives the parents’ birth places
- 1900 - 1940 census gives immigration information
- 1920 census gives the date of naturalization

Passenger Lists

Pre-1820 Immigration

For early passenger lists and immigration information search the **U.S. and Canada, Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, 1500s-1900s**, available on Ancestry.com. The following information may be found in these published records:

- Name and age
- Year and place of arrival
- Naturalization or other immigration record
- Names, ages, and relationships of accompanying family

United States Passenger Lists beginning in 1820

There are many online indexes and passenger lists. Several resources for passenger lists include the following:

- Ancestry: <https://www.ancestry.com> Collections are under Immigration & Travel.
- One-Step Webpages: <http://stevemorse.org/> Collections include Ellis Island, Castle Garden, and other ports.
- Links to indexes by port: Finding Passenger Lists & Immigration Records, 1820-1940s. <http://www.germanroots.com/passengers.html>

Search the FamilySearch Research Wiki for additional information on passenger arrival records. From 1820-1891 the records may include name, age, sex, occupation, and country of origin. After 1891 additional questions were added. They include marital status, last residence, destination in U.S., relative’s name, ability to read and write, who paid their passage, the amount of money they had, and whether they had been in prison, the poorhouse, or if they were a polygamist. The immigrants state of health was also added.

Major Ports in the United States

More people came into the United States through the port of New York than all of the other ports combined. The port of Philadelphia was the busiest port throughout the 1700s and there are some scattered passenger lists that have survived. The following list gives the number of people that arrived at each major port:

Port	Number of People	Port	Number of People
New York	23,960,000	Philadelphia	1,240,000
Boston	2,050,000	New Orleans	710,000
Baltimore	1,460,000		

European passenger departure lists

Hamburg (Germany) Passenger Lists, 1850-1934 are available on Ancestry. The records are indexed up to 1926 on Ancestry. There is a gap in the records from 1915 to 1919 due to World War 1.

Direct passengers left Hamburg and sailed to their destination. Indirect passengers left Hamburg on one ship and transferred to another ship before reaching their destination. The direct and indirect passenger lists are separate until 1911. The handwritten records are in German. For a detailed explanation of the multiple indexes associated with the Hamburg Passenger Lists, search the FamilySearch research wiki at https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Hamburg_Passenger_Lists.

Passports

The National Archives (NARA) has passport applications dated 1795 to 1925. The U.S. Department of State holds passports from 1925 until the present time. Passports were issued to one person, but may include a wife, children, or servants. Passports were often handwritten without a standard form in the early years.

Information on passports usually included the date and place of birth, a physical description, the occupation, foreign destination, and naturalization information. Photographs were added beginning on December 21, 1914.

Naturalization and Citizenship

1790 to 1906

1790 Naturalization Law

The first federal naturalization law was passed in 1790. The basic requirements were a one-year residency in the state, a two-year residency in the United States, good moral character, and the performance of the naturalization in a court of law. Although laws changed throughout the years, generally an immigrant was required to reside in the state for one year and in the United States for a total of five years to become a citizen.

Declaration of Intention

Immigrants could file a declaration of intention immediately after they arrived, although many waited one to three years. There was a three-year waiting requirement (which changed to two years after 1824) between filing the declaration of intention and petitioning the court for citizenship. The immigrant began the process by filling out a declaration of intention, or first papers. This could be done at the age of 18 or 21 (depending on the law at the time), or at any time in his or her adult life. Any court could be used—often the immigrant chose the most convenient court.

Petition

The second step of the process required the immigrant to petition the court for citizenship. This created a second document known as a petition, also called the final or second papers. The petition and the declaration may be filed in different courts or states. Depositions were often filed to attest to the immigrant's moral character.

Oath of Allegiance

To complete the naturalization process, the immigrant took the oath of allegiance. A certificate

of naturalization was then given to the immigrant and the court retained the certificate stub. The petition and certificate of naturalization were always recorded in the same court.

Content of Naturalization Records (1790–1906)

The content of naturalization records in this time period might include the port of arrival, date of immigration, country of origin, and age of the applicant. Forms were not standardized, and each court created their own records, so the records vary.

After 1906

Immigration and Naturalization Service

The year 1906 was a turning point for naturalization records. New laws were passed and naturalization forms were standardized. More federal courts naturalized immigrants. The law required that the courts send duplicate copies of naturalization records to the newly created Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization—later changed to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). In March 2004, the INS was renamed the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). However, the process for naturalization remained basically the same.

Content of Naturalization Records After 1906

After 1906, the following information may be found in naturalization records: Age, birth date, birthplace, residence, date of application, last foreign address, country of birth or allegiance, occupation, personal description, port and date of arrival, vessel of arrival, marital status, birth dates and birthplaces of spouse and children, and date and place the declaration was filed.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Use the USCIS Genealogy Program, to request the following records:

- Naturalization Certificate Files (C-Files), September 27, 1906 to March 31, 1956. Contents include: declaration, petition, certificate of naturalization, and other documents.
- Alien Registration Forms (Form AR-2), August 1940 to March 1944. Contents include: Name, address, date of birth, nationality, marital status, physical description, port and date of arrival and occupation.
- Visa Files, July 1, 1924 to March 31, 1944. Contents include: birth information, parents, children, and their previous residence. A photo after 1929.
- Registry Files, March 1929 to March 31, 1944. Contents include: employment records, a certificate of registry, and proof of residence.
- A-Files, April 1, 1944 to May 1, 1951. Contents include: biographical information, and depending on the time period they may also include a visa, photographs, applications, affidavits, and correspondence. The A-Files index includes the port and date of arrival.

Please note: A \$65 fee will be charged for an index search of the above records and an additional \$65 fee will be charged for a records request. USCIS <https://genealogy.uscis.dhs.gov/>

Canadian Border Crossings

In 1894 the United States created an Immigration Service Agreement with Canadian steamship and railroad lines. It provided for the following terms:

- Treat passengers destined for the United States as if they had arrived at a U.S. port.
- A Certificate of Admission was given to each passenger. This certificate was needed to board a U.S. bound train.

- The certificate was collected at the U.S. border.

Canadian border crossing records include people who came through Canada and crossed the border into the United States by ship or train. They do not contain Canadians until after October 1, 1906. A Soundex index was created by the Works Project Administration. The following information will help to understand the indexing of this record set:

- After June 1917 the Soundex index included only entries from east of the North Dakota/Montana state line.
- After 1 July 1927 the Soundex index included only entries from east of Lake Ontario.
- The Soundex index is complete for the years 1895-1917.
- The Soundex index is largely complete for the years 1917-1927.
- After 1929 there is no geographically complete index!

Both Ancestry and FamilySearch have an index of aliens and citizens crossing into the United States. On the Ancestry link, <http://search.ancestryinstitution.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1075>, scroll down to the article "About U.S., Border Crossings from Canada to U.S., 1825-1960" for the land entry ports.

Manifests 1895-1954

From 1895 to June 1917 records were collected from land ports of entry along the entire U.S. and Canada border. These records were recorded on forms known as ship manifests. Two copies were created. One kept at the port of entry, and one entry forwarded to the INS office in Montreal. The Montreal office was later moved to St. Albans, Vermont and even though the records are from many different land entry ports along the border, the name of the collection was taken from the central office at St. Albans.

Records created from July 1917 to June 1927 were also created on ships manifests. This time period includes records from New York through North Dakota. Also recorded in duplicate, with one record kept at the land port, the second record was sent to the Montreal District office. Another form of record began in July 1927 through June 1929. These records were created on card manifests in duplicate. One copy was kept at the land port of entry, the other copy was sent to the INS District office closest to the port.

Beginning in July 1929 to 1954, land ports from Maine to North Dakota were recorded on card manifests kept at the port of entry.

The Western area of the U.S. from July 1917 to June 1927 with land ports of entry in Montana, Idaho, and Washington were recorded on ship manifest forms in duplicate with one copy kept at the port of entry and one copy sent to the INS District office in Seattle.

Border crossings often came through railroad stations all over the border of Canada and the Northern United States.

Additional Resources

- FamilySearch: <https://familysearch.org> Collections are under Migration & Naturalization.
- FamilySearch Research Wiki (by State): https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/United_States_Immigration_Online_Genealogy_Records
- Ancestry: <https://www.ancestry.com> Collections are under Immigration & Travel.
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: <https://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy>

- Smith, Marian L. "By Way of Canada: U.S. Records of Immigration Across the U.S.-Canadian Border, 1895-1954 (St. Albans Lists)." **Prologue Magazine** Vol. 32, No. 3 (Fall 2000).
- Smith, Marian L. "A Guide to Interpreting Passenger List Annotations."
<https://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/manifests/>
- [Prechtel-Kluskens, Claire. "Canadian border immigration records, 1895-1950s, Part 1: The records." **NGS News Magazine** \(July-September 2007\) 43.](#)
- "Major U.S. Immigration Ports, plus tips for locating your ancestors in arrival records."
<https://www.ancestrycdn.com/support/us/2016/11/majorusports.pdf>
- "Passport Applications." National Archives. <https://www.archives.gov/research/passport>



Over There: World War I Records Over Here

Ken Nelson, AG[®]

The United States World War One Centennial Commission

<http://www.worldwar1centennial.org/>

Reference Books

Christina K. Schaefer. **The Great War: a guide to the service records of all the worlds fighting men and volunteers.** Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1998. FHL 940.41 Sch13g

Michael E. Hanlon. **Researching Your World War I Relative? : Guidelines, Tips and FAQs.** Stanford, California: The Great War Society, 2003. FHL 973 M2h

Margaret M. McMahon, Ph.D. **Researching Your U.S. WWI Army Ancestors.** Crownsville, CreatSpace, 2017.

Geoff Bridger. **The Great War Handbook. A Guide for Family Historians and Students of the Conflict.** South Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Family History, 2013

John J. Newman *Uncle, We are Ready: Registering America's Men, 1917-1918: a guide to researching World War I draft registration cards.* North Salt Lake, Utah: Heritage Quest, 2001. FHL 973 M2nu

David R. Woodward. Robert Franklin Maddox. **American and World War I: a selected annotated bibliography of English-language sources.** New York, New York: Garland Pub. Co., 1985. FHL 973 M23b v. 6

Philip J. Haythornthwaite. **The World War One Source Book.** London, England: Arms and Armour, 1992. FHL 973 M2hay

J. M. Winter. **The Experience of World War I.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Hew Strachan. **The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War.** New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Articles

Tina Beaird. "Recreating a World War I Veterans' Service History," NGS Magazine 43 (April-June 2017): 11-15.

Peter L. Belmonte. "World War One; Documents and Basic Research for Genealogists and Historians." Evetron's Genealogical Helper 52 (July-Aug., 1998): 24- 26.

Patricia A. Case. "Don't Let Your Twentieth Century Veterans Fade Away." *Genealogical Helper*. 41 (Jan.-Feb. 1987): 15-18.

David R. Hardin. "Official Military Personnel Files of World War I Veterans," *NGS Magazine* 43 (April-June 2017): 23-27.

Michael G. Knapp. "World War I Service Records." *Prologue*. 22 (Fall, 1990): 300-302.

Michael G. Knapp and Constance Potter. "Here Rests in Honored Glory: World War I Graves Registration." *Prologue*. 23 (Summer, 1991): 190-194.

Claire Prechtel Kluskens. "Interment of Enemy Aliens During World War I," *NGS Magazine* 43 (April-June 2017): 35-39.

Kathy Petlewshi. "World War I and the Hyphenated American on the Homefront," *NGS Magazine* 43 (April-June 2017): 29-34.

Constance Potter. "World War I Gold Star Mothers Pilgrimages, Part I" *Prologue*. 31 (Summer, 1999); Part II *Prologue* 31 (Fall, 1999)

Carol Richey. "Remembrance: World War I Centenary" *Internet Genealogy* (December-January, 2014): 8-11.

Craig R. Scott. "Tracing the Movements of US Army Units in World War I," *NGS News Magazine* 43 (April-June 2017): 17-22.

Mitchell Yockelson. "They Answered the Call. Military Service in the United States during World War I, 1917-1919." *Prologue*. 30 (Fall 1998): 228-234

United States in the World War

The Official Record of the United States' part in the Great War: the government account of the thirteen American battles and the army of four million men. FHL 973 M25or

Edward Coffman. **The War to End All Wars. The American Experience in World War I.** Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998

Frank Freidel. *Over There. The Story of American's First Great Overseas Crusade.* rev. ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Cp., 1990

Andrew Carroll. **My Fellow Soldiers. General John Pershing and the Americans Who Helped Win the Great War.** New York: Penguin Press, 2017.

American Expeditionary Forces

Army War College. (U.S.) Historical Section. **Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War: American Expeditionary Forces. Divisions.** Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931. FHL Digital Books

John Votaw. **The American Expeditionary Forces in World War I.** Osprey Publishing, 2005.

Adjutant General's Office. **Summary of Casualties Among Members of the American Expeditionary Forces During the World War.** Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920. FHL film 1710607 item 8

James T. Controvich and Martin Gordon, **United States Army Unit and Organizational Histories, a bibliography.** 2 Volumes. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2003. FHL 973 M23cj [v. 2 WWI to present]

James T. Controvich. **United States Army Unit Histories: a reference and bibliography.** 3 volumes. Manhattan, Kansas: MA/MH Publishing, Sunflower University Press, 1996. FHL 973 M23cj

The Doughboys

Edward A. Gutierrez. **Doughboys on the Great War. How American Soldiers Viewed their Military Experience.** University of Kansas Press, 2014.

Thomas Hoff. **US Doughboy, 1916-19.** Osprey Publishing, 2005

Richard Rubin. **The Last of the Doughboys. The Forgotten Generation and their Forgotten World War.** Boston: Mariner Books, 2013.

Hermine Scholz. **The World War I Manuscripts: The World War I Survey.** Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: U.S. Army Military History Institute, 1986. FHL 973 M2sch

Naval and Marine Corps

United States. Navy. **Officers and Enlisted Men of the United States who lost their Lives during the World War from April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918.** Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920 FHL Digital Book

Deaths in the United States Navy from April 6, 1917-November 11, 1918. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920. 1 v. FHL 973 M2diu

Paul Silverstone. **U.S. Warships of World War I.** London: Ian Allen, Ltd. 1970

Craig Robert Scott. **Marine Corps Deaths, 1917-1921.** Berwyn Heights, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2013. FHL 973 M2scm

Army Air Force

Air University. Aerospace Studies Institute. Historical Research Division. **U.S. Air Service Victory Credits, World War I.** Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University, 1969. FHL Digital Book

Norman L. R. Franks and Frank W. Bailey. **Over the Front: a complete record of the Fighter Aces and Units of the United States and French Air Services, 1914-1918.** London, England: Grub Street, 1992. FHL 973 M2frw

James J. Hudson. **In Clouds of Glory: American Airmen who flew with the British during the Great War.** Fayetteville, Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1990. FHL 973 M2hj

Lowell A. Lawrence. **New England Aviators, 1914-1918: their portraits and their records.** Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Pub., 1997. FHL 974 M2n v.1 and v. 2

James J. Sloan. **Wings of Honor: American Airmen in World War I: a compilation of all United States, pilots, observers, gunners, and mechanics who flew against the enemy in the War of 1914-1918.** Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Pub., 1994. FHL 973 M2swh

Lucien H. Thayer, Donald Joseph McGee and Robert James Bender, ed. *America's First Eagles: the Official History of the U.S. Air Force, A.E. F., 1917-1918*. San Jose, California: R. James Bender, Pub. Champlin Fighter Museum Press, 1983. FHL 973 M2taf

Cemeteries

American Battle Monuments Commission. **A Guide to the American Battle Fields in Europe**. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1927.

American Battle Monuments Commission. **American Armies and Battlefields in Europe: A History, Guide and Reference Book**. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938. FHL Digital Book

W. M. Haulsee, F.G. Howe and A.C. Doyle. Comp. **Soldiers of the Great War**. 3 vols. Washington, D.C.: Soldiers Record Pub. Association, 1920. FHL Digital Book U.S, Casualties

Elizabeth Nishiura, ed. **American Battle Monuments; a guide to military cemeteries and monuments maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission**. Detroit, Michigan: Omnigraphics, 1989. FHL 973 V3am

Pilgrimage for the Mothers and Widows of Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines of the American Forces Now Interred in the cemeteries of Europe. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930. FHL 973 M23uw

United States. War Department. **Location of Graves and Disposition of Bodies of American Soldiers Who Dies Overseas. Special Report of Statistics Branch, General Staff, War Department. January 15, 1920**. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920 FHL Digital Book

American Legion

Marquis James. **A History of the American Legion**. New York: William Green, 1923. FHL Digital Book

Jacob Swisher. **The American Legion in Iowa, 1919-1929**. Iowa City, Iowa: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1929. FHL Digital Book

Richard J. Loosbrock. **The history of the Kansas department of the American Legion**. Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Dept. of the American Legion, 1968. FHL 987.1 C4L

Walter F. Richardson, comp. **History. Department of Maryland. The American Legion**. Baltimore: Weant Press, 1934 FHL Digital Book Department Roster pp.176- 191

Miles M. Van Valkenburg. **The American Legion in Michigan**. [S.I.]: American Legion. Department of Michigan, 1930. FHL 977.4 C4v

American Legion. New Jersey. **Department of New Jersey, the American Legion: a general account of the activities of the organization from its institution in 1919 to 1924**. Trenton, N.J.: American Legion department Headquarters, 1924. FHL Digital Book

John Linn Murphy. **The American Legion in South Dakota: first quarter century**. South Dakota: American Legion, [1949] FHL Digital Book

Fred Douglas Estes. **History of the American Legion Department of Tennessee, 1919-1953**. [Nashville, Tennessee:]: American Legion, Dept. of Tennessee, 1953. FHL Digital Book

History of the American Legion, Department of Virginia, 1919-1924: including history of individual posts and roster of membership as of August 1, 1924. Richmond, Virginia: William Byrd Press, 1924. FHL 975.5 C4a. film 845113 item 3 “ histories of individual posts, list of active posts and 1924 membership”

Archives, Libraries, and Museums

National Personnel Records Center

1 Archives Drive

St. Louis, MO, 63138

World War I Records at the National Archives at St. Louis

<https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww1/st-louis-ww1-series>

Finding Your World War I Veteran at the National Archives at St. Louis

<https://www.archives.gov/files/st-louis/pdf/finding-your-ww1-veteran.pdf>

National World War I Museum and Memorial

2 Memorial Drive

Kansas City, MO, 64108

<https://www.theworldwar.org/>

Edward Jones Research Center

<https://www.theworldwar.org/explore/edward-jones-research-center>

Library of Congress

A Guide to World War I Materials

<https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/wwi/wwi.html>

U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center

950 Soldiers Dr.

Carlisle, PA 17013

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Army_Heritage_and_Education_Center

Family History Library

FamilySearch Wiki

World War I United States Military Records, 1917-1918

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/World War I United States Military Records, 1917 to 1918](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/World_War_I_United_States_Military_Records,_1917_to_1918)

State Collections

Microfilm

Alabama. World War I Service Records, 1918-1919, 33 rolls

Connecticut. Military Census Questionnaires of Nurses, 1917-1918. 5 rolls

Florida. World War I Navy Card Roster, 1917-1920, 4 rolls

Georgia. World War I Statement of Service Summary Card Files, 1920-1929, 121 rolls

Indiana. World War I Enrollment Cards, 1919, 35 rolls [Statement of Service Cards]

Indiana. World War I Nurses Enrollment Cards, 1 roll

Kentucky. Certificates of death completed by civil authorities outside the state of Kentucky for World War I soldiers from the state of Kentucky, ca. 1917-1920, 1 roll

Louisiana. List of men who died while serving as officers in the World War, 1 roll

Michigan. County War Records, 1917-191, 266 rolls

Mississippi. Master Alphabetical Index, World War Veterans, Army, 1917-1918., 2 rolls

Ohio. World War I –Service Cards, 76 rolls

Ohio. World War I – Marine Corps Service Cards, 3 rolls

Ohio. World War I – Navy Service Cards, 8 rolls

Ohio – World War I – Out of State Service Cards, 4 rolls

Oregon. Personal Military Service, 1919-1920, 17 rolls

Oregon. World War I Veterans State Aid Applications Card Index, 1921-1938, 24 rolls

Utah. Draft Board Registrations, 1917-1918, 3 rolls

Utah. World War I Service Records Abstracts, 10 rolls

Published on FamilySearch Records

United States, World War I Draft Registrations, 1917-1918	24,872,176
United States, YMCA World War I Service Cards, 1917-1919	27,352
United States, Index to Naturalizations of World War I Soldiers, 1918	18,324
Florida, World War I Service Cards, 1917-1919	42,412

Louisiana, World War I Service Records, 1917-1920	74,174
Maine, World War I draft Registration Index, 1917-1919	162,613
North Carolina, Service Cards, 1917-1919	92,649
Texas, World War I Records, 1917-1920	209,675
California, San Francisco, World War I Enemy Alien Registration Affidavits, 1918	6,545

State Published Sources

Connecticut. Adjutant General's Office. **Connecticut service records: men and women in the armed forces of the United states during World War, 1917-1920.** 3 vols. Hartford, Connecticut: Office of the Adjutant General, [1941?] FHL 974.6 M2cag

Ralph S. Kuykendall. **Hawaii in the world war.** Honolulu, Hawaii: Historical Commission, 1928. Historical Commission of the Territory of Hawaii. Publications; v. 2. FHL 996.9 B4h v. 2

Theodore Calvin Pease. **Illinois in the World War.** 5 vols. Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Historical Society, 1921-23. FHL Digital books

Indiana. Historical Commission. **Gold Star honor roll: a record of Indiana men and women who died in the service of the United States and the allied nations in the world war.** Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Commission, 1921. FHL Digital Book

Kansas. Adjutant General's Office. **Kansas casualties in the World War, 1917-1919. Regular Army. National Guard. National Army. Enlisted Reserve.** Topeka: Imri Zumwalt, state printer, 1921. FHL digital book

Maine. Adjutant General. **Roster of Maine in the military service of the United States and allies in the World War, 1917-1919.** 2 vols. Augusta, Maine: Adjutant General of Maine, 1929. FHL Digital Book

Maryland War Records Commission. **Maryland in the World War, 1917-1919: military and naval service records.** v. 2 Baltimore: Maryland War Records Commission, 1933. FHL Scanned film

Charles H. Landrum, comp., George N. Fuller, ed. **Michigan in the World War: military and naval honors of Michigan men.** [S.l.]: Michigan Historical Commission, [1924] FHL Digital Book

Roster of soldiers, sailors and marines who served in the War of the Rebellion, Spanish-American War and the World War: Nebraska. Lincoln, Nebraska: [s.n.], 1925 FHL fiche

Maurice J. Sullivan. *Nevada's Golden Stars: a memorial volume designed as a gift from the state of Nevada to the relatives of those Nevada heroes who dies in the World War.* Reno, Nev. A. Carlisle, 1924. FHL Digital Book

Roster of the men and women who served in the army or naval service including the Marine Corps, or the United states or its allies from the state of North Dakota in the World War, 1917-1918. 4 vols. Bismarck, North Dakota: Bismark Tribune Co., 1931 FHL Digital Book

Ohio. Adjutant General's Office. The official roster of Ohio, soldiers, sailors, and marines, in the World War, 1917-1918. 22 vols. Columbus, Ohio: F.J. Heer Printing Co., 1929. FHL Digital Book

Oregon. Adjutant General's Office. *Oregon' honor roll: names of officers and enlisted men from Oregon who lost their lives while serving in the armed forces during the World War*. Salem, Oregon: State Printing Department, 1922. FHL Digital Book

Philadelphia in the World War, 1914-1919. New York, New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford, Co., 1922. FHL 974.811 M2p

The Black Hills South Dakota in the World War, 1917-198-1919. St. Paul, Minnesota: Buckbee-Mears Company, 1920 FHL Digital Book

Joseph Mills Hanson. **South Dakota in the World War, 1917-1919**. [South Dakota]: State Historical Society, 1940. FHL 1698113 item 6

Noble Warrum. **Utah in the World War: the men behind the guns and the men and women behind the men behind the guns**. Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah State Council of Defense, 1924. FHL Digital Book

Vermont. Adjutant General's Office. Herbert T. Johnson. **Roster of Vermont men and women in the military and naval service of the United States and allies in the World War, 1917-1919**. Rutland, Vermont, 1927: FHL Digital Book .

Arthur Kyle Davis. **Virginia military organization in the World War; with supplement of distinguished service**. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia War History Commission, 1927. Publications of the Virginia War History Commission, v. 5. FHL Digital Book

Washington's part in the World War. [S.l.: s.n., 1919?] FHL Digital Book